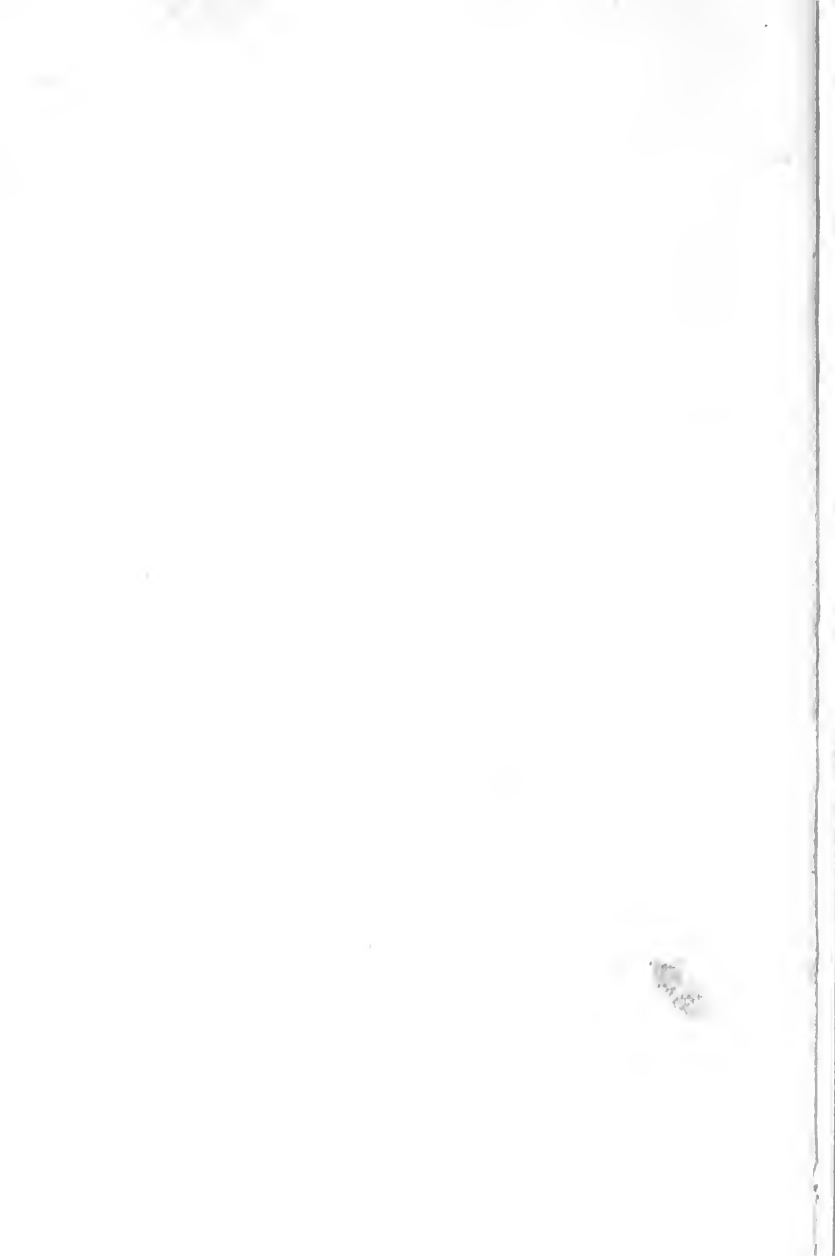


A SISTER OF
PRINCE RUPERT
ELIZABETH GODFREY







TER OF PRINCE RUPERT

BY THE SAME AUTHOR
HEIDELBERG : ITS PRINCES AND
ITS PALACES
ENGLISH CHILDREN OF THE
OLDEN TIME
THE WINDING ROAD
THE BRIDAL OF ANSTACE

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Elizabeth Princess Palatine

From a painting by Gerard Honthorst in the National Portrait Gallery

:: A SISTER OF ::
PRINCE RUPERT
ELIZABETH PRINCESS PALATINE
AND ABBESS OF HERFORD ⌘ ⌘
BY ELIZABETH GODFREY ⌘
WITH A PHOTOGRAVURE PORTRAIT
AND 16 OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS
REPRODUCED FROM PORTRAITS, ETC.

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TO
THE REV. WILLIAM MACINTOSH, M.A., PH.D.
IN REMEMBRANCE OF
HEIDELBERG

PREFACE

SINCE the publication of the only memoir of Elizabeth, Princess Palatine, in English, so much new material has come to light as to justify a new study of one of the least known of the Queen of Bohemia's children, the eldest sister of Prince Rupert. Grateful thanks are therefore due to those who generously permitted the use of copy-right letters: to Madame la Comtesse Foucher de Careil for the invaluable collection of those of the Princess to the philosopher Descartes, discovered and published by her late husband under the title *Descartes, la Princesse Elisabeth, et la Reine Christine*. Also to Herr Professor Doctor Jakob Wille, Principal Librarian of the Royal University Library at Heidelberg, who not only allowed me to make use of the immense collection of family letters edited by Herr Professor Karl Haucke in the *Heidelberger Jahrbücher*, but also to see them in proof, lest my work should be delayed. They throw much new light on the character of Elizabeth, and on her relations with her family. Unhappily those to her mother are not among them, but belong to the papers bequeathed by the Queen

of Bohemia to her lifelong friend, Lord Craven, and are still in the possession of his descendant at Combe Abbey ; these would have been invaluable as showing the feeling between mother and daughter, but were not available.

I also tender my thanks to His Royal Highness Prince Henry of Prussia for the photograph of the portrait of Princess Louise, by Honthorst, in his collection at Burg Rheinstein, which he kindly allows to appear. Also to the Director of the Mauritzhuis at the Hague for allowing me to have a photograph taken of the Honthorst portrait of Frederic William, Elector of Brandenburg, and his wife. Especial thanks are due to Herr Rector Normann of Herford, both for getting photographs taken of the interesting old prints in the museum in his charge and for directing me to authorities on the history of the old abbey. The Librarian of the Bodleian Library kindly permits the reproduction of a portrait of the Princess Elizabeth which is of special interest, since, attributed to the school of Honthorst, it is not improbably by the second sister, Louise Hollandine, who was a pupil of the fashionable portrait painter and said to have had great skill in catching likenesses.

I must, before closing, express my sense of the kindness of M. Dr. van Wijk, Keeper of the Manuscripts at the Royal Library at the Hague, who was ever ready to give himself trouble in finding the

whereabouts of desired illustrations or sources of information. I am also much indebted to the courtesy of the Doctor in charge of the asylum at Endegeest for permitting me, as a special favour, to see the home of Descartes, though it is as a rule strictly closed to visitors. Without this I must have borrowed a second-hand description from other writers.

In conclusion I should like to quote the words of a literary friend, for whose suggestions and kind help in proof-reading I am most grateful. She writes : " Elizabeth is a very human, very ' modern ' woman ; one feels one has met her in these crowded days—unlike her own in many ways, and yet so like in the clash of creeds, the nostrums, and the general unrest."

ELIZABETH GODFREY.

SETLEY, BROCKENHURST.

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A SISTER OF PRINCE RUPERT

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CHAPTER I

THE ENVIRONMENT OF ELIZABETH

The family of the King of Bohemia—Princess Elizabeth's letters—Intellectual atmosphere in Holland—Elizabeth's connection with great movements—Thirty Years' War—Civil War in England—Influence of Philosophy—Of Quietism—Her position as Abbess of Herford—History of her House—Position of the Palatinate at her birth.

SOMETIMES there meets us in the pages of history a personality that appeals to us, not by splendour of achievement, not by political importance, but in virtue of an intimate and familiar charm, or by some strange potency of self-revelation whereby we know him in his tastes and his idiosyncrasies as we know those we meet in everyday life, not as we image from afar the occupants of thrones or the dwellers in the distant arena of statecraft. To these delightful persons who make history real and living to us belong the large family of the King of Bohemia and his wife—King and Queen of one brief winter—brought up in exile, yet in brilliant

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surroundings, in poverty and cheerful optimism, in inextinguishable yet ever-frustrated hope. Of the thirteen two are well known to English readers, besides the mother herself, Princess Royal of England, only daughter of James I and granddaughter of the beautiful Mary Stuart; Rupert, the third son, who, with his brother Maurice, fought for the Royalist Cause, and became quite an English prince; and the youngest princess, Sophie, Duchess of Hanover. She by the Act of Settlement was made Queen Designate of Great Britain, a title by which she was proud to style herself, and though she did not outlive her cousin Anne, and never sat upon the English throne, was the mother of the Hanoverian line. In her charming gossiping Memoirs, in the family correspondence—for they were all voluminous letter writers—the group stand revealed in their faults and foibles, in the little jests and nicknames current among them, in their courage and charm, in the warm affection which, in spite of bickerings, they show to one another, and we realise that, after all, human nature was much the same in the seventeenth century as in the twentieth.

The third child and eldest daughter, Elizabeth, by no means the least gifted among them, has hardly had justice done her. Her very virtues have stood in her way. Humble, reserved, taking small interest in social functions or in current chit-chat, she was wholly lacking both in the self-importance and the touch of malice which render the Memoirs of her youngest sister such amusing reading. Elizabeth wrote no memoirs, wished, indeed, that all her letters

might be destroyed, and of autobiographical material she left no scrap. Her only English biographer, Madame Blaze de Bury, has eked out her scanty material with the annals of the House of Orange, but since this was published many of Elizabeth's own letters have come to light. Some long reposing in dusty archives have been unearthed by the diligent researches of Professor Karl Haucke and published in his collection of the letters of the children of the Winter King in the *Heidelberger Jahrbücher*. These comprise many from Elizabeth to her cousin the Princess of Zweibrücken, her predecessor as Abbess of Herford, with whom she was on terms of affectionate intimacy, several to her brother, the Elector Palatine, about the marriage negotiations on behalf of their sister Henriette, and some to the Elector of Brandenburg.

Most important of all is the long series of letters to Descartes, supposed to have been destroyed by her own wish, copies of which were recovered some years ago by M. le Comte Foucher de Careil through a piece of singular good fortune. He had been making diligent inquiry and search among the old bookshops of Amsterdam for any remains of the Princess's correspondence, having devoted much study to the relation between Descartes and his distinguished pupil, and had given it up as a hopeless quest, when he one day received a communication from M. Frédéric Müller, a dealer in old books, to the effect that having been entrusted by the Baron de Pallandt with the task of cataloguing and arranging the contents of his library at the Château of Rosendal, near Arnheim,

he there found a bundle of MS. letters, numbering twenty-six, from the Princess Palatine to Descartes, together with two or three from Queen Christina of Sweden. These appeared to be copies from the originals, and the last from Christina to Descartes was dated some years subsequent to his death, and was most probably to his friend, Chanut ; but M. Foucher de Careil was entirely satisfied of the authenticity of those from Elizabeth, both because in style and matter, in turns of phrase, they closely corresponded with those known to be by her, and because they so accurately matched those addressed to her by Descartes and published in the edition of his letters by Victor Cousin. No hypothesis is put forward to account for their being there, but it seems not improbable that on her death they may have come into the hands of her brother Rupert, to whom the Queen of Bohemia had bequeathed the country house at Rhenen, not many miles down the Rhine, and when the old house was dismantled before being pulled down, may have been purchased by the Baron or his predecessors—not impossibly unconsciously in some old bureau in which they may have been stowed. These letters are most valuable, throwing much light on Elizabeth's mental development as well as on some circumstances of her career.

Another interesting series of letters, belonging to her later years, and showing the attitude of her mind on religious questions, addressed to the eminent Quaker, Robert Barclay of Ury, is to be found in MS. copies in the British Museum. Besides all these, the

Memoirs of Sophie, Duchess of Hanover, and her voluminous correspondence with her brother and niece abound in characteristic references to her eldest sister. In all these Elizabeth stands clearly before us in her uprightness and simplicity of character, her high qualities and her foibles, her great mental endowments and nervous, sensitive temperament. We see her as the thoughtful student, the devotee of Cartesian philosophy, the affectionate, anxious elder sister, the loyal friend, constant in her attachments and generous to those whom she thought oppressed, differing somewhat from the rest in tastes and temper, and a little apt to be, or to fancy herself, misunderstood, yet always preferring the interests of her family to her own. Not seldom somewhat at odds with her elder brother, the Elector Palatine, but always on affectionate terms with Rupert, next her in age, to whom she was drawn by community of tastes and pursuits, and fondly cherishing all the younger ones.

She, with all her brothers and sisters, seemed to inherit something both of the bad-luck and of the brilliant qualities of the two ill-fated but gifted lines from which they sprang, and in Elizabeth more strongly than in the rest came out the solid and steadfast character that distinguished the other strain, the House of Orange, derived from the Grandmother, Louise Juliane of Nassau, widow of the Elector Frederic IV. Of the thirteen children brought up by the exiled pair at the Hague, three, two boys and a little girl, died in early childhood, while the hope of the House, the Hereditary Prince Frederic Henry, was cut

off by drowning in dawning manhood, but not before he had shown high promise both in character and capacity. Of the nine who grew up, five brothers and four sisters, nearly all were distinguished in some way—all more or less good-looking, some remarkably handsome, lively, witty, high-spirited, and not a few celebrated for some special talent.

The second son, Charles Louis, who succeeded his father as Elector Palatine, was an extremely handsome and accomplished man ; he won for himself the title of " Restorer of his Country," and not of its material prosperity alone, but of the University, which was its chief glory. The exploits of Rupert belong to English history, but besides his military renown he gained a distinguished reputation both in science and in art, and gave a good deal of help to his sister Elizabeth in her more practical studies. Maurice and Philip, if they had less opportunity than he for displaying their capacity, were both courageous and brilliant soldiers, and very early placed in responsible commands. Edward, neither so tall nor so handsome as his brothers, lacked also their energy. Fairly good-looking, well-bred and agreeable, he passed an indolent and undistinguished life, chiefly in Paris.

Of the four sisters both the eldest and the youngest attained celebrity, Elizabeth as the friend of Descartes, Sophie as the patroness of Leibnitz. Of these two a distinguished Frenchman said, in answer to one who affirmed that women of the German race were destitute of *esprit*, that in all France he had met no one of a more charming wit than the Duchess of Hanover, nor a

more deeply learned student of philosophy than her sister the Princess Palatine Elizabeth, and an Englishman who knew them well at their brother's Court at Heidelberg gave similar testimony, asserting that Elizabeth was the most learned lady, Sophie the best bred woman in Europe. The second sister, Louise Hollandine, was so accomplished an artist that her work has been more than once attributed to her master, Gerard Honthorst, the Dutch portrait painter, while Henriette, less clever than her sisters, was still more richly dowered with beauty and grace.

On all, girls as well as boys, was bestowed a first-rate education, for in those days the training of the youth of both sexes was on much the same lines. In the seventeenth century learned ladies were by no means rare. Women had shared to the full in the intellectual revival of the preceding age, and they were quick to receive the new philosophy which was just unfolding. If Elizabeth Princess Palatine stands pre-eminent as one who was described as the most learned woman in Europe, it was by virtue of her personal gifts rather than of any exceptional training she enjoyed. In her day girls of the upper classes were as thoroughly schooled in Latin, logic, and mathematics as their brothers, as well as taught to write a fair and legible hand, to draw, to play stringed instruments, and sing at sight. Also they were expected to speak and write fluently in at least two modern languages—the Princess was equally at home in four. No bad foundation this on which to build. Some added a knowledge of Greek, of Hebrew, even of Arabic, and not a few dabbled, at the

least, in theology and philosophy. It has been observed, I think, by the late Mr. Hamerton, that women have an innate leaning to theology, and with this goes a taste for philosophy, in some of its aspects, and Malebranche averred that the women of his day embraced and understood the principles of Cartesianism as he expounded them, more readily than men.

At the time that the exiled Palatinate family were living in Holland that country was enjoying its blossoming season. After the long struggle under William the Silent, political and religious liberty had been attained, the land was resting on its laurels, and the two cultivated and enlightened princes who succeeded their father as Stadthalters were both enthusiastic patrons of learning and of all the arts that beautify life, while comparative security and toleration offered a fair field for the promulgation of new ideas. It was an intellectual atmosphere, and in the literary guilds and circles which, following the fashion set by the Humanists in the Rhenish and Danubian Societies, were springing up all over the Low Countries, women bore no inconsiderable part. Moreover, a woman—the learned and celebrated Anna Maria van Schurmann, called “The Dutch Minerva”—was lecturing and disputing with learned professors and divines in the halls of the universities of Utrecht and Leyden. So it is rather as the fine flower of a flourishing tree than as a solitary exception that the Princess claims attention.

Rare she was in the qualities of her mind, uniting a swift intuitive perception, essentially feminine, with a

strong masculine grasp of logic, a combination of qualities which enabled her to understand equally the metaphysical subtleties of one branch of the new philosophy and the clear mathematical sequence of the other. Rare too she was in her whole-hearted devotion to study and the intense concentration of mind with which she could follow out an argument closely and lay an unerring finger on any weak link in the chain of reasoning. In breadth and sanity she excelled one rival, Anna Schurmann; in depth and solidity she eclipsed another, the young Queen of Sweden, Christina, whose more flashy attainments might dazzle, but could not stand comparison with those of the quiet and modest Princess, whose felt but unasserted superiority galled the spoilt and flattered young sovereign. It was this singular union of gifts, this unique balance of faculty, that won for Elizabeth the admiration and loyal friendship of the foremost thinker of the age, René Descartes.

Uneventful though her personal career was, she was linked with every great movement of her times. Child of the Reformation, her family fortunes—misfortunes rather—had their roots far back in the extreme development that movement assumed in her father's country. Her youth and early womanhood were passed under the blighting shadow of the Thirty Years' War, while her old age witnessed the aggressive invasion of Germany by Louis XIV. Through her brothers she was brought in contact with the Civil War in England, which had a serious though indirect effect on the hopes and prosperity of her family.

Besides these things the mental forces of the age were brought to bear on her. By her intimate friendship and correspondence with Descartes she shared in the dawning of that new conception of the universe which had already almost routed the Scholastic Philosophy, and was in a generation or two to revolutionise science. The new forces in religion, which the late upheaval had let loose, had a deep influence on her temperament, naturally inclined to piety and bred in the straitest dogmas of the Dutch Reformers. The Erastian principle, established by the Diet of Spire, that every nation should be at liberty to choose its own form of faith, had been pressed to its logical conclusion that every individual might do the like, and the century following the Reformation brought forth an abundant crop of schisms. Among these the mystic doctrines of Quakers, Quietists, and Labadists appealed to that spiritual hunger of the heart which cold Calvinism could not satisfy, and though not wholly adopting their views, she was in her latter days strongly influenced by them. This seems on a superficial view a strange development for the disciple of the clear-thinking, hard-headed Descartes, but the inconsistency is only apparent, for the inner principle of his teaching that appealed especially to Elizabeth, was the looking within rather than without for guidance, the freeing of the mind from dependence on tradition. Descartes' starting-point, from the inner consciousness evolving the conception of God, was at one with the doctrine of interior illumination on which Jansenists, Quakers, Labadists—all Quietists in short—built,

though leading to such far different conclusions. The ruling principle laid down by Labadie was that "the soul must judge of all things by its own inward light to the exclusion of all outward impressions produced by mere sense, and of all illusions of the imagination." This dictum, starting with the Cartesian principle of founding knowledge on the basis of inward conviction, passes into the tenets of Quietism which always exercised a great fascination over the mind of Elizabeth.

In the autumn of her life the Princess enjoyed a unique position as Abbess of the Protestantised Nunnery of Herford and Prelatess of the Empire. In this one cannot but feel that she had a magnificent opportunity to her hand and missed it—missed its potentialities, that is. Gifted woman as she was, had she but made of her Abbey a home of learning and philosophy, as she was so well qualified to do, instead of letting it sink into a mere asylum for narrow-minded fanatics who tried to persuade her that all secular study was worthless and vain, what might she not have accomplished towards stemming the ebb-tide which, especially in Germany, was to sweep the education of women into a backwater for many generations?

Her own learned tastes and love of books, however, remained with her to the last; she entered with interest into her sister's friendship with Leibnitz and exchanged some letters with him, and also had a correspondence with Malebranche, who was endeavouring to bring the Cartesian philosophy more into harmony with Christianity. She also enriched the library of her Abbey with many books and MSS.

To comprehend the influences which surrounded Elizabeth it is needful to take a slight survey of the history of the race from which she sprang. This I will do very briefly, having told the story of the Palatinate more fully in *Heidelberg : Its Princes and its Palaces*. At her birth the Rhenish Palatinate was at the zenith of its prosperity : in the fourteenth century under Rupert I, and greatly through his friendship with the Emperor Charles IV, as well as through his own statesmanlike qualities, it had risen to great importance both in the Councils of the Empire and as the seat of one of the earliest universities in Germany, which made it from that time forth a centre of thought and of scholarship. This prosperity, imperilled under the next Rupert, who was also Emperor, was consolidated by the good government of Louis IV and the brilliant conquests of Frederic the Victorious. In the time of Philip and his successors, his two sons, Louis V and Frederic II, and his grandson, Otto Henry, came the golden days of the Renaissance, filling Heidelberg with learned men and beautiful buildings. In those days the castle became glorious, a palace in place of a frowning stronghold, enriched with the finest works of art in architecture and sculpture.

The Reformation, under these enlightened princes, was making its way gradually on the lines of genuine reform of abuses rather than of sudden schismatic upheaval ; but with the change of dynasty it was to take on a new shape, which was soon to shake the Palatinate to its foundations. On the death of the last

of the Wittelsbachs the Simmern line came in, bringing with them the doctrines of Geneva, supported with all the enthusiasm of a new crusade. After violent oscillations between Lutheranism and Calvinism the pendulum settled down to the teachings of the Heidelberg Catechism, under the rule of John Casimir, Administrator for his infant nephew. Stability having been secured by the high-handed manner in which he overrode the will of his brother Louis VI, he nursed his ward's patrimony most successfully, and at his death left him heir to a prosperous and unencumbered land, and also to his own position as the leading champion of the Alliance of Protestant Princes. Shortly before he died he had arranged a marriage for his nephew with Louise Juliana, of Nassau, a daughter of William the Silent, by his third marriage with Charlotte de Montpensier, daughter of the Duc de Bourbon. This Charlotte, whose mother was a Protestant, had escaped from the convent to which her father had consigned her, and had taken refuge at Heidelberg with Frederic the Pious, the first Elector Palatine of the Simmern line. He warmly espoused her cause and firmly refused to give her up to the irate father, and for several years she grew up with his young sons and daughters, and had been as a sister to John Casimir. With these young people the great champion of the Protestant Cause, William the Silent, was quite a hero of romance, and though he had lost one wife and divorced another, Charlotte was proud to become his third. She died after a very few years of union, leaving two daughters, one of whom

became the wife of the Huguenot Duc de Bouillon, the other, Juliana, being destined for Frederic IV, Elector Palatine. William's fourth wife, Louise de Coligny, was a very kind stepmother, and brought up the two little girls in all the strict Puritan discipline and Protestant tradition of their House. Elizabeth, Queen of England, was godmother to the little Juliana, and a very pretty little letter is extant in which the child invokes the protection of the powerful Queen after the assassination of her father, the Prince of Orange.

Probably Juliana was no stranger to her young bridegroom, and the union was a happy one, clouded only from time to time by Friedrich's lapses into his unfortunate failing, a too great appreciation of the Rhine wine for which his country was so famous. In her day was added the noble pile known as the Friedrichbau with its ranks of historic statues. Six children were born to her, of whom five grew up: Frederic, who became Elector Palatine and afterwards King of Bohemia, Philip Louis, a somewhat insignificant person, and three daughters. The eldest of these married her cousin the Duke of Zweibrücken, who was Administrator during her brother's minority, the second became the wife of George William, Margrave and Elector of Brandenburg, and the youngest, Catherine, remained unmarried, and was her mother's constant companion to the day of her death.

In Juliana's granddaughter Elizabeth is very clearly to be traced the influence of this mingled Dutch and Huguenot ancestry; not only in her firm adherence

to the Protestant teaching in which she had been bred, but also in a certain staidness of character which set her somewhat apart from her more riotous brothers and sisters. With her mother, Elizabeth Stuart, a new strain was introduced, and from that line the daughter, missing the charm which the mother had derived from her beautiful grandmother, Mary of Scotland, inherited the long features and dark eyes of the Stuarts, together with a temperament inclined to melancholy, in which, as well as in her steadfastness—not to call it obstinacy—she not a little resembled her uncle Charles I. Moreover, she seems to have had more than her share of the persistent ill-luck which dogged the Stuarts, for she was a proverb in her family for it. When late in life she attained her desire in being made Abbess of Herford, her sister Sophie hopes that Elizabeth's luck may have turned at last. "This is the first thing," she writes to her brother, "that she ever succeeded in."

Ever since the change of dynasty from the Wittelsbach to the Simmern line, the Palatinate had taken a very pronounced part on the side of the extreme Reformers, establishing Calvinism as the State Religion, and embodying it in the Heidelberg Catechism, drawn up as a standard of doctrine for that party. Frederic IV, though not such a strong man as his grandfather nor as his uncle, the Administrator, had inherited the leading position of the latter in the Alliance of Protestant Princes, and his son, Frederic V, on attaining his majority, aspired to put himself at their head. He was young, untried, though full of

promise and overflowing with enthusiasm, and his family connections marked him out for taking a leading part in European politics. Grandson of William the Silent, and nephew of Maurice, who was carrying on and consolidating his father's policy, Frederic had with him the Calvinistic interest of the Low Countries ; as nephew by marriage to the Duc de Bouillon, at whose castle he had been educated, he engaged the sympathies of the French Huguenots, for whose cause John Casimir had often fought, and his marriage with the Princess Royal of England would, it was hoped, unite the Protestants of that country with those of the Continent ; moreover, from both grandfather and uncle he inherited the confidence of the reformed bodies of the Rhineland.

It was little wonder perhaps that he should have been selected by the representatives of revolted Bohemia for the dangerous honour of their crown ; but the critical conjuncture of affairs on the eve of the Thirty Years' War required an older and a wiser head. It was yet to be seen how incapable Frederic was, spite of excellent intentions, of playing a great part on the world's stage, though his vacillations on receiving the proposal might have opened men's eyes. Though urged to acceptance by his Dutch and Huguenot uncles, who saw in the offer a great opportunity for Protestantism, he hung back when a swift and resolute decision might have availed ; then, when he had sent to consult his father-in-law of England, without waiting for that touchy monarch's reply, stung by a taunt, he rushed upon his fate. Swayed alternately by the

beseechings of his prudent mother and by the eager ambitions of his young and ardent wife, he accepted the crown, but passed the day before he went to assume it in humiliation and dire forebodings. Standing as he did at the height of the prosperity and power of his own little principality, he reached for something beyond, hardly so much from ambition as from a misguided sense of duty, and so lost all.

But this was the subsequent development of affairs ; at the time his eldest daughter made her entry into this troublesome world all things were at the height of smiling prosperity and fair promise.

CHAPTER II

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Birth of Elizabeth—Prosperity—Offer of Bohemian Crown—Departure of her parents—Elizabeth and Charles with their grandmother—A new little brother—Henry's letters—Ill news from Prague—Battle of White Mountain—Removal of the children to Schöndorf—The Palatinate threatened—Flight to Brandenburg—Birth of Maurice—Parents settle at the Hague—Elizabeth with her grandmother at Krossen.

HEIDELBERG CASTLE, in the zenith of its beauty and magnificence, was the birthplace of Elizabeth ; the scene was at its fairest, the time at the most propitious. The splendid pile shown in the contemporary prints by Merian was in all its glory, in the fresh completeness of its later palaces, while all its ancient walls and towers were as yet untouched by war or decay. Though it was not many years since the grandfather of the little Elizabeth had raised the stately building on the north side of the quadrangle, her father had added another noble suite of rooms to receive his bride, called in her honour the English Wing. The interior of this was very richly decorated, with floors of porphyry and gilt pillars, walls hung with tapestry, ceilings painted in fresco with cornices inlaid with gems ; it formed a block of ten rooms, described as



HEIDELBERG CASTLE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
From an old print by Merian

“a complete Gothic Palace.” One saloon, probably the withdrawing-room of the Electress, was all in white marble with silver decorations and brocaded hangings in white and silver to correspond, and was known as the Silver Chamber. This portion is shown in the old print by Merian which illustrates this chapter, rising high against the Thick Tower, and adjoining the Friedrichbau, with which it communicated. In one of these luxurious chambers, now a hollow ruin, the little princess first saw the light ; most probably in one of those looking out on the other side across the moat, for there lay the Electress’s garden which had been laid out along the old Ordnance Terrace under her windows to please her on the birth of the Electoral Prince, by his delighted father. Arranged in less formal style than the elaborate designs which the great landscape gardener, Solomon de Caus, was carrying out all up the wooded hills to the south and east, it would be filled with those sweet old-fashioned English flowers the English bride had learned to love in her childish days at Combe Abbey, and tended under the direction of her friend Lucia Harrington. No flowers, however, were in the gardens to greet the little new-comer, whose arrival in this cold world, like that of so many of her brothers and sisters, was in the winter. Likely enough, shrubs and borders were shrouded in snow and the trees glittering with hoar-frost diamonds, for winters are hard in Heidelberg if summers are hot.

The precise date is variously given ;* some German

* Räumler, *Historisches Taschenbuch*. 3 Folge, I Jahrgang.

authorities name 5th January, 1619, Madame Blaze de Bury, following Guhrauer, places it on 27th December, 1618, which is the date given on Elizabeth's tombstone in Herford Minster Church. These two dates would be reconciled by the difference between old and new style, a source of great confusion at this period, more especially in what relates to the Palatinate family, since England was still adhering to the old style, while the Continent had adopted the new, and the Queen of Bohemia and her children used either or both indifferently; but the discrepancy between these dates and that given by Mrs. Everett Green in her memoir of the Queen of Bohemia—*Lives of the Princesses of England*—is too great to be accounted for in this way. She states on the authority of Stow's Chronicle, and also on that of a letter from Lewenstein to Carleton in the Holland Correspondence, that it took place on 27th November, 1618, between one and two in the morning. Possibly the German date may be that of baptism instead of birth, or Mrs. Green's November may be a misprint for December.

Be that as it may, the time of Elizabeth's entry into the world was that of her country's highest prosperity, just before the fatal step was taken which was to doom the Palatinate to ruin and the reigning family to half a century of poverty and exile. Seldom to all seeming did fairer auspices surround a cradle: not one of those who welcomed the advent of the baby princess but would have foretold for her a brilliant future, a life lapped in luxury, and safe, if ever mortal life can be considered safe, from all mischance and dis-

aster. Happy too she seemed in her home surroundings; her parents were young, handsome, popular, highly gifted and cultured, and devotedly attached to one another, and since her arrival had been preceded by that of two sturdy boys, she had not encountered the doubtful welcome accorded to a daughter when dynastic hopes have been set upon an heir. If the young father and mother thought more of their boys, there was much cherishing for the new baby at the hands of the tender grandmother, the Dowager Electress Juliana and the maiden aunt, Catherine, whose especial charge the little niece became in later days.

No such gorgeous ceremonies are recorded on the baptism of the little princess as attended that of the Electoral Prince, described in Stow, or that of the second brother, Charles Louis,* for whom the King of Denmark, the uncle of the Electress, and Charles Prince of Wales, her brother, stood sponsors by deputy. Princess Catherine was the godmother, and in all probability held the baby at the font, and the godfathers are unrecorded. The christening doubtless took place in the Castle chapel, which formed the ground floor of the Friedrichbau, so the infant would not have to encounter the inclement blasts of a German January. The Court Chaplain, Doctor Scultetus, a rigid Calvinist, performed the ceremony, such as it was, and the mother's name alone was bestowed upon the baby.

Of her early days we learn nothing. Father,

* *Mémoires de Loyse Juliane Electrice*, Friedrich Spanheim

mother, and grandmother were all too deeply absorbed with the affairs of kingdoms to have leisure for those of the nursery ; for through those first months of her life the question of the crown of Bohemia was being debated, while she, unconscious infant, little recked how the decision was to deflect the course of her whole future from its fair beginning. The summer was waning when the fatal choice was made, and on a gloomy October day the Elector and his wife drove for the last time out of the grand courtyard, she little thinking she was never to see her home again. They took the eldest boy, Frederic Henry, heir, as they deemed him, to the crown of Bohemia, to show their new subjects, leaving the two babies in the charge of the Electress Dowager. Elizabeth was but an infant, barely ten months old, and Charles was about two years. One pictures them, held up in the arms of the aunt or the weeping grandmother, to look at the fast-vanishing coach, and wave a tiny hand as it drove under the battlemented gate-tower and over the drawbridge, and went thundering down the stony hill to the town.

The little Electoral Prince seems to have retained a fond remembrance of his baby sister, though she was too young to remember him, as he often sent her trifling presents and messages in his letters to his aunt Catherine. He was a beautiful child, the especial pride of his father, already at five years old showing a likeness, which must have gratified his mother, to her beloved young brother, Henry Prince of Wales, after whom he was named, and whom he was also, alas ! to

resemble in his death in opening manhood. He had the same oval face and broad thoughtful brow, the same full lips, firmly closed, but with much sweetness in their smile, the same quick intelligence and aptness to learn, the same gracious ways, winning popularity with the people, and the same loving heart. This likeness must have endeared him to his mother, who all her girlhood had looked up to her elder brother with fond sisterly admiration as well as affection—indeed, it was supposed to be not a little her lively recollection of his enthusiastic devotion to the Protestant Cause that made her spur her husband on to the enterprise on which they were now embarked.

The die was cast and away they went to take possession of their barren honours, leaving the brilliant and happy home of their early married days, never again to revisit it together. No wonder that the grandmother, far-seeing woman as she was, wrung her hands and mourned as she saw them disappear that the Palatinate was sacrificed to Bohemia. They departed cheerfully enough, Elizabeth's eager, hopeful spirit sustaining the more despondent temper of her husband, who was oppressed with conscientious scruples and weighed down with forebodings of coming disaster. He must have looked back with regretful tenderness at the gentle mother whose urgent and wise advice he had set at naught. Did Elizabeth, one wonders, shed a tear over the baby girl she was not to see again for so long? No doubt she looked to have her as well as the little toddler Charles sent to the new kingdom at no distant date, when affairs should be

more settled ; the prospect that she would not see them again for nearly two years, and then in exile and sorrow, never crossed her buoyant spirit. For her little Charles she had an especial tenderness. Many years later, on sending him to England, she wrote to her old friend, Sir Thomas Rowe,* " I ever loved him best, even when he was but a second son " ; it must surely have cost her a pang to leave him behind.

The grandmother and aunt had left their home at Kaiserslautern, where they had been settled in the dower house soon after the marriage of the young Elector, and took up their abode in the castle in order to maintain the dignities of the Court while the government was administered by Frederic's brother-in-law, the Duke of Zweibrücken. There would, however, be but little entertaining—nothing beyond what the formalities of the position demanded. The tastes of both Juliana and her daughter were for quiet and seclusion, and they had now but little heart for amusement ; it must have been a very different life from that under the gay rule of Elizabeth. They were very loving and tender guardians to the two babies left in their care, but their hearts were too full of anxious forebodings to make them very cheerful playfellows for the children ; and these two, who passed their early years with them, were always of a graver and less playful spirit than their brothers and sisters, born in misfortune though most of the younger ones were. Moreover, there was more of Puritan strictness in Juliana than in her daughter-in-law.

* Green's *Lives of the Princesses of England*.

Details of the childhood of the little pair there are none; whatever letters were sent to the parents, reporting health and well-being, growth or progress in their studies, have not survived, in all probability left behind at Prague and lost, but a knowledge of their surroundings and of the characters of those who had charge of them supplies the framework. It is easy to picture them playing about the spacious rooms and courtyards or roaming in the big gardens which surrounded the castle and stretched up into the wooded hills. That winter the baby would be taking her first steps in one of those round wooden hoops, raised about eighteen inches from the floor, in which a baby was supported by its armpits, as may be seen in old German prints, the weight being thus taken off the feeble legs till the art of walking was mastered and some balance gained. She was a fine child, and at one time bigger than her brother, though he was a full year older, as we learn from a letter from little Prince Henry to his grandfather James I of England, written a year or two later. Charles was, however, a very good-looking boy, and if he grew late, developed into a tall and strikingly handsome man. He had fair curling hair and blue eyes, while the little Elizabeth had the dark eyes of the Stuarts.

When Elizabeth could run the two children may have amused themselves trying to thread the mizmaze, such a fashionable feature of the gardens of those days, which Solomon de Caus had designed, as shown in the illustrated book of plans for the garden which he dedicated to the Elector Palatine

not long before the departure to Bohemia. In and out trot the little pair, the boy still in petticoats, after the custom of the day, the girl a year younger, toddling, after him, a solemn baby with big, round dark eyes and fresh pink cheeks, dressed in a full skirt down to her toes, possibly protected by a muslin apron with a frill at the bottom, a stiff little stomacher with her waist at her armpits, and her head covered with a close white cap. This would be considered sufficient for the garden unless the sun was hot, but for driving to the town or such occasions of ceremony it would be surmounted by a big hat with feathers. This was the fashion in which well-born children were dressed throughout the seventeenth century, and it endured through many generations, for in those days fashions changed but slowly. Thus are her little cousins of England dressed in the Vandyck portraits of a few years later. Perhaps they rolled their balls or trundled their hoops along the terrace on the rampart of the English garden, and the boy would certainly love to pitch stones down into the valley far below and watch them go bounding down the hill. In the other part of the gardens, partly built into the rocky acclivity, was the curious monkey-house with its carvings of strange beasts and birds over the doorways, where their mother's pets were kept, and no doubt the children would be immensely entertained with the antics of the quaint creatures. The Queen's favourite dogs probably went with her, but enough would be left to play with the children, who loved pets as she did. On the south side were the sloping cherry orchards

with gnarled trees, tempting to climb as they got a little older, where a generation later Charles's own little girl, Liselotte, loved to play.

In summer time Juliana would be sure to take her little grandchildren to her own best-loved haunt in the woods, where her husband, Frederic IV, had built in their early married days a little hunting lodge at the Wolfsbrunnen, the scene of the legendary tragedy of Jetta, which was commemorated by a bronze wolf. From the wolf's mouth a fountain spouted, tinkling down into a moss-grown basin with goldfish, and thence through a trim garden with box-edged borders and miniature terraces which her son, Frederic V, had laid out. We can fancy her bringing the children here and telling them of the childhood of her own six, their father and his brother and sisters. Catherine, too, would have many childish recollections of the place. Quiet as were the tastes of the Electress Dowager, she enjoyed riding and open-air life almost as well as did the English Elizabeth, and Elizabeth the younger learned to love tranquillity and green woodland places.

It would be interesting if we could know what remembrances, if any, the child carried away of it all. Children, in those days, matured so much earlier than they do now, and she was gifted with such unusual powers, both of observation and of memory, that it is not impossible that some faint traces of those fair peaceful days may have remained. She was hardly old enough that first winter to take in the news that came from Bohemia of the arrival of a new baby brother, and of the splendid ebony cradle

that had been presented by the citizens of Prague for his reception. Charles would be told, and later might talk to her about the little Rupert, for these children, though apart, were taught to take great interest in each other. Charming letters came from time to time from little Henry : he writes to his brother with the prim religious forms inculcated in those days,* " I trust you omit not to pray diligently, as I do day and night, that it may please God to restore us to happiness and to each other." This from a boy of six to one not quite four ! The next sounds more natural : " I have a bow and arrows with a beautiful quiver tipped with silver, which I would fain send you, but I fear it may fall into the enemy's hands." This reference to the enemy shows it to have been written in the autumn of 1620, and just before he was sent away to his uncle for safety comes a mention of his little brother : " Rupert is here blythe and well ; he is beginning to talk, and his first words were ' Praise the Lord ' in Bohemian." In a letter to his aunt Catherine, just before the catastrophe, he sent Elizabeth a little heart—" with a true-hearted brotherly kiss," and a little later he writes from exile of his longing to see his little sister again " in dear Heidelberg with all happy things about her."

News from Bohemia must have seemed from the first ominous and disquieting to the anxious watchers at Heidelberg who had foreseen difficulty and disillusionment. Even before the coronation took place disputes and misunderstandings arose, fanned into a

* *Rupert, Prince Palatine*, Eva Scott.

flame by the indiscreet zeal of the Court Chaplain, Scultetus, who entirely misconceived the situation, holding his master called to establish the straitest Calvinistic version of the Reformed Faith with a high hand instead of supporting the liberties of the Bohemians. Political freedom and religious toleration were what Frederic's new subjects desired, and they were so split up among themselves, and their views so diverse, that to impose one rigid form of faith on all was to outrage and alienate some large section of the nation, and thereby to court disaster. The coronation difficulty was got over at the price of offending Scultetus and his party of extremists; but when he avenged himself by instigating the hewing down of the ancient crucifix which for centuries had adorned the principal bridge in Prague, not all the Queen's charm and former popularity could avail to convince the infuriated citizens that it had not been done by her connivance, if not by her order. The new subjects did not actually rebel, but they gave a sullen and half-hearted support to the king whom they had chosen and invited, and when the troops of the Emperor gathered round and began to close in upon Bohemia, the result was a foregone conclusion. So, while the children played and prattled and roamed about the gardens in their summer pride for the last time, the storm was gathering which should not only drive the Winter King from his new dominions, but banish the children from their beautiful home on the Neckar.

With the autumn came terrible news of defeat and disaster, of the fatal battle of White Mountain by which

all was lost, and of the hurried flight from Prague. The little Electoral Prince had been already placed in safety with his uncle ; but the baby Rupert, who remained with his mother, had the narrowest escape of falling into the enemy's hands. He was, of course, in charge of his nurse, and the woman, it seems, laid him down on a settee in the large saloon while she collected his clothes, or possibly more valued possessions of her own. In the sudden panic that arose on the report that the Imperial troops were upon them she forgot all about the poor baby, and he would have been left behind, only, being a lusty infant, he kicked till he rolled off on the floor, uttering yells that fortunately attracted the notice of Christopher Dhona, rushing through the rooms to gather up leavings in haste. He had but just time to snatch up the child and toss him into the last coach bearing the fugitives, which was at that moment turning out of the courtyard. The poor mite rolled down into the boot among the baggage, from whence, on his redoubling his cries, he was rescued by the occupants and carried in more seemly fashion. It is hardly fair to lay this to the Queen's charge as proving her an indifferent mother, for she doubtless believed the little prince safe with his own attendants, and she was absorbed in sustaining her husband, overwhelmed by the disaster, and doing all she could to comfort her lady-in-waiting, whose husband was among the fallen. Though she was herself in a state of health that might have excused nerves and hysterics, she put aside her own distress and showed the utmost fortitude, giving all needful

orders with foresight and calmness. It was only when her inspiring presence was withdrawn that the household fell a prey to panic.

There must have been anxious expectation in Heidelberg that the fugitives would endeavour to reach home, and could they have done so, Frederic's best chance would have been to make a stand in his own dominions, in his well-fortified castle surrounded by the loyal support of his own people. But the Imperial troops lay between, the road was difficult and dangerous, if not impossible, and his one thought was to get his adored wife into a place of safety while she was still able to travel ; his anxiety for her overshadowed all sense of public duty. It was a case where the best husband makes the worst king or commander, and he hurried her anxiously from place to place. In truth the Winter King lost his head in the completeness of his overthrow, and instead of frankly abandoning an untenable position, and taking his stand on his inalienable rights, he continued to grasp at the shadow and throw away the substance till the shadow of an empty name was all that remained. He left the defence of his own country to his brother-in-law, a well-meaning but ineffectual person whose chief claim to being appointed Administrator was the extremeness of his Calvinistic opinions, while he wandered about, seeking a refuge for the Queen, and help to regain that fatal crown.

The first halt was in Saxony, but the fugitives had already been placed under the ban of the Empire, and were requested to move further. They next

repaired to Frankfort-on-the-Oder, looking confidently for a welcome, or at least an asylum, from the Margrave of Brandenburg, both as a prominent member of the Protestant alliance, and as husband of Frederic's sister Charlotte. But George William had been, so to speak, sitting on the fence during the affair of Bohemia, and now made haste to descend on the safe side ; he looked coldly on the refugees, and professed that his duty to the Emperor forbade him to harbour rebels. But poor Elizabeth could stand no more hurried journeys in the depth of winter ; mere humanity demanded that a refuge should be found for her, and churlishly enough he placed the almost ruinous and deserted castle of Cüstrin at her disposal, adding the discouraging information that it was bitterly cold and hardly weather-proof, overrun with rats and but half furnished. Such as it was she resolved to make the best of it. With her characteristic cheerful courage she, who had given birth to her first four children in palaces surrounded with every dainty luxury wealth and love could devise, now, in the lack of the commonest comforts, without carpets, curtains, cushions, and with the barest needful utensils, with no attendance but that of her two faithful ladies-in-waiting, brought a new little prince into the world, born a lackland and to be a lackland all his days—her Christmas baby, Maurice, born on a snowy Christmas Eve.

Meanwhile the two little ones, with their grandmother, had been carried off from Heidelberg, no longer considered safe, and had spent the winter at Schöndorf. The Imperialists and their allies were

threatening the Palatinate, and troops were drawing nearer and nearer to the doomed capital: a brief return of a few weeks was made when Schöndorf became unsafe; but when the Bergstrasse was in the hands of the enemy it became needful that they too should seek a refuge in Brandenburg. George William was less ungracious to his wife's mother than he had been to her brother, so thither travelled our little Elizabeth, leaving Heidelberg a prey to the invaders, not to see her early home again till she had reached middle age.

How long the Queen remained at Cüstrin we do not know, nor whether, while she was so near, she saw her little daughter; but we gather from a letter of Prince Henry's to his grandfather King James, written in the spring of 1621, that for a time they were all together, probably before the King and Queen departed for the Hague. He writes: * "Sir, we are come from Sewnden [*sic*] to see the King and Queen and my little brother Rupert, who is now a little sick. But my brother Charles is now, God be thanked, very well, and my sister Elizabeth, and she is a little bigger and stronger than he."

New arrangements were now made: the States-General of Holland, having urged the fatal enterprise upon the Elector Palatine, now very creditably acknowledged the obligation to support him; and Maurice the Stadthalter, his uncle, who was one of Elizabeth's devoted admirers, having received and escorted her when she came as a bride on her way to

* Green's *Lives of the Princesses*.

Heidelberg, offered a residence at the Hague, and a subsidy which, with Elizabeth's dowry from England, should have sufficed for their support—"until their restoration," which all Protestant Europe imagined must come about in a year or two at farthest. So to the Hague they went, taking with them Henry and Rupert, baby Maurice so soon as he was weaned being sent to the nursery of his aunt Charlotte, in Brandenburg, while Charles and Elizabeth remained in their grandmother's charge at Krossen, where she and Princess Catherine made their home for many years.

Definite information concerning the children's life there is very much to seek. The biography of the Electress Dowager Juliana has been written at some length by her chaplain, Friedrich von Spanheim, but it is a tantalisingly disappointing production, entirely lacking in those precious little personal touches of character or of the events of everyday life that make the value of biography as an adjunct to history, and containing hardly a mention of the grandchildren whose education was her prime interest for so many years, only referring to them when they were of political importance, just recording the birth of the Electoral Prince, or the distinguished sponsors who lent lustre to the baptism of the second boy. The little girl, in whom the grandmother was wrapped up, who was her companion for a long period of her childhood, might have been non-existent for any mention of her in these pages. In fact the whole memoir is but a peg on which to hang the history of the Thirty Years' War from the writer's point of view. Far better is the more

recent study by Miss Bunnet, who made independent researches in Heidelberg and Karlsruhe, and unearthed more detail than Spanheim vouchsafed ; but though this gives much interesting information concerning Juliana's private life as girl, wife, and mother, and also of her last days, the portion covering the education of her grandchildren is practically a blank.

Education had probably already begun for the little folks before they settled at Krossen. Elizabeth at two and a half, and Charles in his fourth year, could most likely already read ; not impossibly the boy had begun Latin, for children were taught much earlier then than now, and an educational expert of that day recommended that they should be taught to read as soon as they could speak, and Latin concurrently with English. Aunt Catherine, in the midst of her sorrows and anxieties on behalf of the brother she loved so well, may have found solace in teaching his children, instructing the little Elizabeth in her Horn-book and setting her tasks on her sampler. Both children were clever and quick to learn ; Elizabeth very docile and obedient, grave and sober above her years, Charles intelligent and capable when he would apply himself, but wilful and of a somewhat sulky temper.

Krossen, though containing a castle of the Margraves of Brandenburg, was but a small town, situated on the borders of Silesia where two rivers meet, the Oder and the Bober, and surrounded by open country, so the children probably led much the same outdoor life of play as they had enjoyed at Heidelberg, though the gardens were nothing like so large and fine as those

of their old home. Make-believe, however, can do wonders, and doubtless they were quite happy and hardly realised the disaster that had overtaken their House. In winter, as we learn from later letters of Elizabeth, Krossen was often quite snowed up, for the north-eastern part of Germany is far colder than the Rhineland ; but some part of every year was spent at Brandenburg or Berlin, where their other aunt, the Electress Charlotte, was very kind to them, and where they would see Maurice, and also had their little Brandenburg cousins to play with, the eldest, Frederic William, " the great Elector," as he afterwards came to be called, being all his life warmly attached to his cousin Elizabeth.

After a short time Maurice was sent to the Hague, where already Henry and Rupert were with their mother. A little sister, Louise Hollandine, had been added to the nursery, and each year saw a fresh arrival. The Queen had moved into another house, as it seemed the exile was likely to be prolonged, and Charles and Elizabeth remained with their grandmother for the present.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATION

Disadvantages of Brandenburg—Removal of the children to Leyden—The Prinsenhof—Desirability of separate establishment for the children—Letter of Prince Henry—Arrival of Charles and Elizabeth—Her primness—The nursery party—Their games—Elizabeth's lessons—Schoolroom day—Court etiquette—Religious training—First acquaintance with Anna Maria van Schurmann.

AT the time when the little Princess Palatine was living with her grandmother at Krossen, the Mark of Brandenburg, later to rise to pre-eminence as the kingdom of Prussia, was as yet considerably behind the south and west of Germany in point of cultivation. The wave of Humanism which had swept the Rhineland into the main current of European culture had scarcely, if at all, touched the fringe of the cold northern Electorate, though possibly Charlotte, on her marriage with the Margrave George William, may have imported some of the refined tastes for which the Palatinate family for several generations had been distinguished. Berlin, instead of being one of the chief capitals of Europe, was but the second town in the Mark, Brandenburg, on the Havel, being the principal residence of the Margraves, though it possessed the nucleus of its castle which Frederic William, now a

child, later enlarged and adorned with the first of its art treasures. Now it is one of the best centres for education in art and music ; but at that day good masters for those things and for dancing and elocution, of which the Queen of Bohemia thought a good deal, were probably hardly to be had there or at Brandenburg, still less at lonely Krossen, away on the frontier, so, though the Dowager Electress and her daughter were accomplished women, fully competent to direct the children's studies for some time, as they grew older, and the residence at the Hague promised to become permanent, it was decided to withdraw them from the fond care of grandmother and aunt and send them to share in the advantages being bestowed on their brothers and sisters at Leyden.

The states of Holland extended a very liberal hospitality to the unfortunate Winter King and Queen, and a few years after they had taken up their abode at the Hague, as their family was increasing very rapidly and the residence lent them was not very large, the authorities of the town of Leyden put at their disposal a house near the University for the establishment of a kind of Nursery Court for the young princes and princesses. This appears to have been kept for the occupation of the Stadthalter when he visited the town, as it was known as the Princelogeement or Prinsenhof ; and Sir Dudley Carleton, ambassador at the Hague, writing to Calvert, mentions it as having been " lent by the Prince of Orange." The archives of the town of Leyden, however, contain the record under date 28th May, 1641, that the Hof-



Photo.

THE PRINSENHOF

From an old print in the Archives, Leiden. By permission of Dr. J. C. van Oevergaard, Curator of the Archives

J. Gouda, Leiden

meister of the children of the Queen of Bohemia came to the assembly of the Burgomasters of Leyden "to present her thanks for the permission accorded them for so many years to live in the house called the Prince-logement, and in acknowledgment of this courtesy she begged their acceptance of a silver-gilt cup" (now in the Town Museum). This, of course, proves that the town authorities were the owners.

The house stood at the corner of the Rapenburg, its principal windows looking out upon the canal which flows past the old University, and one side commanding the Langenburg. It had been originally the convent of St. Barbara, and probably covered the ground now occupied by several houses. It was demolished many years ago, and the fine old edifice which faces the canal is now divided into three, the middle part being a restaurant called the Maison Prince. Trees now shade the canal and form a pleasant walk on its borders ; these do not appear in the contemporary print, but that does not prove that there were none, since if in the way of a clear view of the building, the artist, not being bound by the limitations of photography, would have no scruple in leaving them out, and trees along all the canals seem to have been an essential feature of the Dutch town of that day. The position must have been a very convenient one, as the boys had but to cross the bridge and run a hundred yards or so to attend the lectures and classes which were then held in the old University building, though now in different halls established since.

Their tenancy of the house extended a long while, nearly eighteen years, from the summer of 1623 to May, 1641. The letter in which Carleton refers to the arrangement then being made is undated, but must have been written in the early summer of that year, as he alludes to the expectation of the birth of another child, and Louis was born 21st August, 1623. The letter is worth quoting, showing the careful interest the King and Queen were taking in the establishment of the children. The passage runs :*

“The Prince Elector and Her Highness returned from Breda on Tuesday last. . . .” (It will be observed that, according to the wish of King James, the title of King and Queen of Bohemia was withheld by English correspondents.) “To-morrow they are going to Leyden to visit a house belonging to the Prince of Orange which he lends them, where they intend to settle the three children they have here for some time, under the government of Mons. de Plessen and his wife, both persons very fit for such a charge. Their Highnesses are in part compelled to this course by reason of the greatness of their family, which exceeds the proportion of the small house they have here, and will increase by one more within this few months, when it shall please God to send Her Highness a safe delivery.”

Maurice, it would appear, must have been still at Brandenburg.

It seems a gratuitous assumption on the part of the youngest, Sophie, writing many years later, that the Queen chose to bring up her children at a distance from indifference, “preferring the antics of her mon-

* Green, *Lives of the Princesses*.

keys and lap-dogs to those of her babies." All her life, since her old days at Combe Abbey, Elizabeth had loved pets and adored her horses and dogs, and so did most of her children, and it is true she never was a woman to be wholly wrapped up in her nursery ; but it may be questioned if she did not do far better for her numerous brood in maintaining her place in society, and furthering their interests by keeping up with influential friends and holding herself and her tragic misfortunes well in the public eye. She was, moreover, a most devoted wife, and all her powers were absorbed in trying to sustain the more despondent temper of her husband and spur him on to fresh efforts to recover all they had lost. Through the long days of exile, when the stairs were steep, the bread bitter to the dethroned King, she kept up his spirit as well as her own, and was ever inciting him to fresh plans and inspiring him with new hopes of regaining at least his ancient patrimony, if the crown he had lost was past recovery, and it was needful that she should smile upon the friends, new and old, who came to offer their swords to her service, and keep up a continual correspondence with emissaries in various Courts and with old friends in England from whom aid might be looked for. It is likely, with all these cares, she did not find very much leisure for the flock of little toddlers who followed one another so quickly.

Both she herself and Frederic had been brought up at a distance from their parents, as was the custom for Royal or well-born children in their day ; he had been educated in the guardianship of the Duke of

Bouillon, and she had had a little Court of her own at Combe Abbey, presided over by Lord and Lady Harrington, her father, James I, considering that it was best for children to grow up away from the distraction of Court life. Madame de Plessen had been Frederic's own governess till he was seven, so she was well fitted to undertake the care of his children. His own instructions to the tutor for the forming of the prince's mind were very precise:* "Be careful to breed him in the love of English and of my people, for that must be his best lining; and, above all things, take heed he prove not a Puritan, which is incompatible with Princes who live by order, but they by confusion." A letter written in his tenth year by the boy to his grandfather shows his progress. It is in a round, childish hand:—

SIRE,—I kiss your hand. I would fain see your Matie. I can say *Nominativo hic, haec, hoc*, and all five declensions, and a part of pronomen, and a part of verbum. I have two horses alive that can go up my stairs, a black horse and a chestnut horse.

I pray God to bless your Matie.

Your Matie's

Obedient Grandchild,

FREDERIC HENRY.

Elizabeth must have been about nine and Charles in his eleventh year when they were taken from the seclusion of Krossen and the fostering care of grandmother and aunt, and despatched to Leyden to find their own level amongst the troop of brothers and

* *Green's Princesses.*

sisters who must have been almost strangers to them. Elizabeth appears to have been a somewhat formal little person for her years, for Madame Blaze de Bury relates a characteristic little anecdote, that on her arrival at the Hague her great-uncle Maurice, pinching her ear, remarked, "Why, here is another Juliana as demure as the first." This seems rather apocryphal since Maurice died in 1625, at which time Elizabeth would be barely seven years old, and though seven was the age at which nursery days were supposed to end and more serious schooling to be entered on, all her biographers are at one in stating nine as the age when she rejoined her family. Moreover, in a letter referred to by Mrs. Everett Green, written in the autumn of 1626, there is mention of a probable descent of the Imperial troops on Berlin, and of the fears that were entertained lest the two children there might fall into the hands of the enemy. On the whole, the probability is that they did not return till 1627, and it may very well have been the other great-uncle, Frederic Henry, by whom the remark was made, as he succeeded his brother as Stadthalter, and being recorded of "the Stadthalter," the biographer, without a reference to date, may have ascribed it to Maurice. No doubt, Elizabeth was a prim little maiden, having been so much with grown-up people, and one of the uncles, at any rate, made merry over her soberness and stiff old-maidish ways, so unlike the riotous little crew that had been added to the nursery since her day. It is a pity that none of the letters extant record what father or mother thought of her ;

they must have been together at the time of her return, so there was no interchange of impressions, as there might otherwise have been, as they wrote almost daily letters when apart.

Nor is there any description of her arrival at the juvenile Court at Leyden ; our knowledge of the life there is almost entirely drawn from the Memoirs of Sophie, and that shrewd little observer was not yet in existence. What a picture she might have given us of the brother and sister, newly come from afar, almost strangers to the rest as they must have been, except to Henry and Maurice. Imagination paints the two standing together, Elizabeth perhaps clinging to the hand of the brother she was used to, a little aloof, eyeing and being eyed, as is the wont of children just introduced to one another ; tall of her age and perhaps a little awkward, not a little shy, and made more so by the teasings of the merry uncle at the Hague. Beside her the fair, handsome boy, even less inclined to make friends than she was, a trifle sullen, and, after having been "cock of the walk" at his grandmother's for so long, not quite disposed either to defer to the elder, the Crown Prince, or to permit the familiarities of the younger ones. His rather moody temper earned him presently the nickname of Timon, which clung to him all his life, for Elizabeth, writing to Rupert some forty years afterwards on a money dispute, refers to Charles by the old nursery title.

The other children had more of their mother's bright, eager, friendly nature, and probably accorded a warm welcome to the new-comers. Henry remem-

bered his brother and sister well, and as they had met some seven years before they would remember him, at least Charles would. He was now a tall, well-grown lad of twelve or so, quite out of the women's governance and attending the University, already, when at home, made quite a companion by his father, who took great pride both in his quick intelligence and in his manly looks and strength. If a little less regular in feature than Charles Louis, he had a countenance of greater sweetness and charm. Rupert was not quite a year younger than his sister, and a wonderfully quick and clever child. He had babbled in three languages by the time he was three years old, and now knew five, having added Dutch and French to his original repertoire of German, English, and Czech. He was a trifle obstinate, however, about the dead languages, declining to burden himself with Latin and Greek; he was going to be a soldier, he always said, and for a soldier modern tongues would be enough, and he was a young man who always knew very well what he wanted. The learned professors of the classics at the University probably found that you may lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink. Mathematics, the science of fortification, physics, and drawing he would study, for he had plenty of capacity; plenty of obstinacy, too, and what he did not choose he would not learn. He was a high-spirited, eager boy, absolutely fearless, and we may well believe at eight years old ever in mischief, for it is of the unruly boys that such men as Rupert, the military commander, are made. His family nick-

name was Robert le Diable. Hard after him in age and height followed Maurice, and the two were so alike and so closely knit in a strong bond of fraternal affection they might have been taken for twins. Whatever Rupert did, Maurice must do too, and where Rupert went, Maurice must needs follow. If what we know of Rupert in later life may be taken as an indication of what he was in childhood, we may picture him a boy full of resource and invention in a day when playthings were few, as well as ringleader in all the pranks and practical jokes for which the whole mirthful set were famous. Maurice, with less initiative, was always ready to play lieutenant in Rupert's diversions.

Next came a little girl, Louise Hollandine, the first who was born at the Hague, goddaughter to the States-General, who bestowed not only her second name, but also a pension of £200 a year. She had been baptised in the Calvinist church close to the house on the Vorhout, where the exiled family lived. She was quite unlike her sister, not so tall for her age and less regular in feature, but softer looking and graceful as a kitten, a very merry child and good-natured, idle in some ways and desperately careless, but able to display immense energy in the things that really interested her. Edward, two years younger, was a sturdy, round-faced boy with more of the little Dutchman in his build and manner than his slender brethren, who all took after the Stuarts, but dark-eyed like the rest. Between him and Louise had come a little boy, Louis, but before Elizabeth joined the nursery party

he had died of a fever in teething, to the great grief of his mother, who wrote to her constant correspondent, Sir Thomas Rowe : “ He was the prettiest child I had, and the first I ever lost.”

The flaxen-haired baby Henrietta completed the party at this time ; later were added Philip the hasty and hot-tempered, a little Charlotte, baptised in 1639, but not living long enough to join the Leyden nursery, and Sophie, a quick, clever child, wonderfully observant, whose recollections are the source of most of what we know of the youth and home life of the family. Last came the little Gustavus, born after his father's death and named after the King of Sweden, a very lovely child, but so frail that his life was one of continual suffering, and he died at the age of nine. Sophie relates that on one occasion he and she were taken to the Hague to be shown to the Princess of Nassau, who remarked in English : “ He is very pretty, but she is thin and plain—I hope she does not understand English.” She did, however, and bitterly resented the remark. Plain she certainly was not, spare and light, with fair, curly hair, and very sprightly, becoming later the darling of her brother Charles. But this is anticipating ; when Elizabeth arrived little Sophie was not yet one of them.

About a year after Elizabeth's coming her father had a group painted by Poelenberg to send to England to their uncle Charles I, of the seven elder children in semi-classical costume, with hunting trophies at their feet and a landscape background : the two little ones, Henrietta and Philip, being considered too young to

include. The King wrote of it to his brother-in-law as "the great portrait in which your Ma. will see all your little servants and maidens whom you bring up—or rather who live on your bounty." The youngest girl, seated at the end of the row with a bird on her finger, is Louise, the little maiden in red Elizabeth.*

It is rather pathetic to read that the children's favourite game was an imaginary journey in coaches, for which chairs must do duty, with stoppages at imaginary inns on their road to Heidelberg, always the goal of their travels. This no doubt was devised by Henry, who remembered. Little deemed they how long that journey was to be, and how few of them were to arrive.

Into the midst of the lively party came the grave little pair, but they soon shook down amongst the rest and rubbed off their stiffness in that atmosphere of laughter and jest; both were clever enough, and Elizabeth, though she never wholly lost the gravity of her demeanour, quickly picked up a certain brightness and readiness in repartee, for in after years a brother and sister meeting her again after a long absence lamented to each other the loss of her liveliness and aptness of tongue.

In lessons she would be at no disadvantage—at least, in the more solid ones; she had been well grounded, and was always clear-headed to grasp down to the very foundations whatever was taught her, and she had especial aptitude for languages and logic. In the fine arts, in music, in which her mother delighted, and

* This picture is now at Hampton Court.

in painting, in which both she and her sister Louise had lessons from Honthorst, the celebrated Court painter at the Hague, she did not rival the others. Both Louise and Rupert had marked talents in this direction. Singing and lute-playing were invariably taught at this period, but Elizabeth was never able to do more than bear her part without discredit in the family concerts, and her want of proficiency was rather a disappointment to her mother. Of the particulars of her schooling there is no record, as her education was finished before Sophie, with her descriptive pen, came upon the scene, but it is not likely that Madame de Plessen changed her methods much, and what was taught to Sophie a few years later was doubtless taught to Elizabeth. Latin and modern languages were an invariable part of the usual school course. Though, indeed, the two gifted daughters of Römer Visscher at Amsterdam were not instructed in the dead languages, the omission was commented on as something quite unusual, and attributed to their father's hobby of bringing forward his mother-tongue as a literary medium.* Natural Science and Chemistry we know Elizabeth studied, for a little later, when their school-days were over, we read that she and her brother Rupert delighted in chemical experiments and in making collections of natural objects.†

Greek, indeed, formed no necessary feature of the education of girls in Elizabeth's day, though the Renaissance had made it quite the mode for a century

* *Studies in Northern Literature*, Edmund Gosse.

† *L'Influence de Cartésianisme*, Foucher de Careil.

past for those who aspired to higher culture than ordinary. The great Queen of England, godmother to our Elizabeth's mother, had learned it; so, too, had Lady Jane Grey and the talented daughters of Sir Thomas More; several ladies of the North family were admirable scholars, and, if becoming a little unusual, it was far from being entirely neglected. Many German and Dutch ladies understood it, and the studious young princess, with her marked literary tastes and facility for languages, was glad to avail herself of the advantages which the University offered. It does not appear that the younger sisters took it up, but Elizabeth threw herself into the study with so much zest, and had so great an enthusiasm for the art and culture of the ancient Greeks, that the brothers and sisters, who had a taste for inventing nicknames for one another, dubbed her *la Grecque*, a name which clung to her in family letters to the day of her death. University professors attended to give her instruction in this as they did for all the more masculine branches of the education bestowed on the young princesses; but Heinz is surely in error in supposing her to have received instruction in Philosophy from Descartes in these early days, since he does not appear to have taken up his abode at Endegeest till 1637,* at which time the princess had finished her education and returned some years to the Hague, and most authorities represent him as making her acquaintance there for the first time in 1640.

* *Descartes*, by T. P. Mahaffy, "Philosophical Classics for English Readers."

For any idea of the schoolroom life we are indebted to the delightful reminiscences of the youngest Princess, Sophie. Her school-days were not, indeed, coeval with her elder sister's, as there were nearly twelve years between the eldest and the youngest girl, and the latter important little person had not yet been added to the nursery party at the time Elizabeth joined it; but probably the same course was pursued, and the lessons and rules would be much the same for the successive sisters as they passed through the strict hands of Madame de Plessen and her daughters. Allowing for differences of temperament, which were considerable, we may well picture the school-days of Elizabeth and Louise from those of Sophie.

The arrangements made for the children, if strict, were excellent. At the head were Monsieur and Madame de Plessen, or Ples, as Sophie gives it, who seem to have been well fitted for the post. It seems odd that Mrs. Everett Green gives the name of Madame Ketler, "formerly governess to the King of Bohemia," as having charge of Princess Louise (before the return of Elizabeth), and Sophie speaks of one of the daughters as *Mademoiselle de Quat*. The probability is that the good lady may have been married twice, and her daughters by the first husband may have been Ketler, shortened on the infant tongue to Ket or Quat. The daughters were not young, for the critical pupil declared them to look older than their mother and ugly enough to frighten small children, and the mother she considered must have been very old, since she had educated her father. Though she makes merry over

their oddities and, childlike, resents their strictness, she acknowledged there was essential goodness and kindness of heart. "They brought us up," she says, "to love God and fear the Devil," and though pleased to be emancipated when her turn came, she admits she parted with the good ladies with some regret, and always retained an affectionate recollection of them.

Sophie's description of the day's routine would probably fit that of the elder sisters. She rose at seven and repaired to the chamber of Mademoiselle Marie de Quat, who made her say her prayers and read the Bible, and afterwards repeat quatrains by Pelrac while she herself cleaned her teeth, making terrible faces the while, which left a more vivid impression on the pupil's memory than did the lessons. By half-past eight she was dressed, and from that time till ten she took lessons from the various tutors who attended—"unless indeed," says she, "the bon Dieu sent me a cold to comfort me." This would hardly have voiced the feeling of Elizabeth, who loved her studies. At ten came the dancing-master, very welcome to the lively child, who enjoyed prancing under his instructions till eleven, when the boys returned from the University, and dinner was served with considerable ceremony at a long table in one of the large and lofty rooms looking out upon the lime trees and the canal. It will be observed there is no mention of breakfast; the early breakfast, or *petit déjeuner*, was only just being introduced, and probably was not allowed to these hardy children.

Sophie's account of the formalities observed is amusing:—

When I entered, my brothers were ranged opposite with their Governor and Gentlemen-in-Waiting behind them. I had to make a deep curtsey to the Princes and a little one to the others ; a very deep one on taking my place, and a little one to my Governess who with her daughters made a very deep one to me on entering. I had to make another on handing them my gloves and another to the gentleman who handed the basin to wash my hands before Grace, and the last on seating myself at the table. All was so regulated that one knew on each day of the week what one would eat, like in a Convent. On Sundays and Wednesdays two ministers of religion, and two professors dined with us. After dinner I rested until two o'clock when tutors came again. I supped at six and went to bed at half past eight after praying and reading the Bible.

These must have been the oddest Sunday parties : the demure princesses, riotous enough by themselves or when at play with their brothers, kept in primmest order by their old governess and, though some were mere babies, taught to pay and receive the strictest observance of Court etiquette, as well as to entertain their learned and perhaps elderly guests with suitable topics of conversation. To the quicksilver nature of the little one this was evidently a hard bondage, but to Elizabeth, trained and disciplined as she had been at Krossen, and possessed of a good deal of natural gravity and dignity, these observances would come more easily. In another point her early training may have helped her. Religious instruction was made a

matter of great importance, and the Puritan tone prevailed; it was based on the principles of the Heidelberg Catechism, which they had to learn by rote in German without understanding it. Elizabeth, however, we may be sure, understood it, for with her earnest, inquiring mind she would ponder these mysteries and ask about them. She accepted its formulæ as truths, and they formed the basis of those Protestant convictions which remained unshaken in after years by intercourse with the Catholic philosopher, Descartes, and would not suffer her to make a Catholic marriage. All her life she had a strong leaning to theological and philosophic speculations, and, if not too shy, the earnest and sedate little maiden may have asked explanations of the Catechism and discussed deep questions with some of the Sunday guests.

We must not, of course, confound the religious Puritanism, which was a leading characteristic of the faith in which these children were bred, and of which their father and uncles were the champions, with the political Puritanism deprecated by the King in his instructions for the education of his son. With extreme Calvinistic views, the Protestant bodies of Germany and Holland were rigid sticklers for Church government. Much Bible reading, with evangelical explanations and long sermons, were what the children were brought up upon.

Unless Sophie's two hours of "rest" after dinner meant play, as it most likely did, no exercise is allowed for in the time-table, save the daily hour of dancing, and no fresh air at all. The house, which

had formerly been the Convent of St. Barbara, probably possessed a good-sized garden, and besides, since Holland at this time was free from war and tumults, it is not impossible the children may have been conducted for country walks in the spare hours between dinner and the arrival of the afternoon tutors, under the escort probably of some of the Gentlemen-in-Waiting, for in those days ladies seldom took their walks abroad without masculine protection. From the Prinsenhof it was but a very short distance across a couple of bridges to the raised causeway along the banks of the Rhine, then, as now, diversified by windmills and boat-building yards. These were succeeded by a double row of shady trees, and it became quite a country road along which the younger children could trundle their hoops and toss their balls, while the sedate elder walked beside her governess. It was a road which was to become very familiar to Elizabeth in after days, as it led to Endegeest, the home of her friend Descartes.

Visits from the father and mother were not infrequent, and are mentioned now and then in Elizabeth the elder's letters, or in those of friends from the Hague, writing to England, but there is never any special mention of one child or another. The children were occasionally sent to the Hague to be shown to visitors, as this is recorded of Sophie and Gustavus, and was probably also the custom with the elders. These occasional visits seem to have taken the place of letters; if Elizabeth wrote to her mother, the letters have not been preserved, nor are there any to

her grandmother and aunt, as one would surely have expected. One would give a good deal to know her own impressions of those days, but Elizabeth, though an admirable writer in the way of discussing subjects that interested her, was no recorder of daily events or current chit-chat.

One girl friendship Elizabeth had with a girl considerably older than herself, Anna Maria van Schurmann, whose learning and accomplishments would dazzle the studious Princess. This seems to have been formed at this time, for Mademoiselle van Schurmann, though educated at Utrecht, was frequently lecturing at Leyden or holding disputations in the great hall of the University. Perhaps Elizabeth sat with her in the curtained pew, which was probably arranged for her like the one she occupied at Utrecht. They had a correspondence, but the letters which have survived belong to a later period. Their friendship suffered a long break, to be renewed in after years. The four years between Elizabeth and her next sister were enough to prevent their forming any very close companionship, for Elizabeth was old for her years and leaned to the company of elder folk, to which she had always been accustomed; while Louise remained somewhat childish, and their tastes were always very different.

We may picture the young Princess growing up in these surroundings for many years, her mind and time fully occupied, her taste for learning strengthened, her manners being formed on the most approved models, while at the same time she would get a little



Photo.

Louis Frutke, Herford

ELIZABETH AT THE AGE OF TWELVE

From a portrait by Kaspar Barlens

By permission of Herr Rector Normann of the Herford Museum

shaken out of her natural soberness by forming one of a large and merry family party. The portrait painted of her by Kaspar Barlens about this time, if not remarkable as a picture, is very interesting as a likeness ; it represents her with a round, sweet face and high forehead, and a certain gravity and staidness ; she wears a simple dress with a long pointed corsage, the broad white collar and white cap and veil almost seem to foreshadow the future Abbess, though no such dignity was dreamed of for her for many years ; an open book lies in her lap, and her slender hand—a Stuart hand with long, pointed fingers—rests upon the open page. The tame goldfinch perched on the finger of the other hand suggests that she shared her mother's love of pets. She was about twelve years old when this was painted.

Formal though the education may have been according to our modern notions, it was adapted to its end ; the sisters were well equipped to take their place in the world, and it was a very brilliant group of princesses who surrounded the Queen of Hearts at the Hague a few years later.

CHAPTER IV

YOUTHFUL DAYS

Elizabeth's return to the Hague—Death of Prince Henry—Swedish campaign—Death of the King of Bohemia—Letter of condolence from Elizabeth to her cousin on similar bereavement—The Queen's high courage—Social position—House on the Lange Vorhout—Marriage of the Stadthalter with Amelia de Solms—Elizabeth's comradeship with Rupert—Negotiations for her marriage—Her refusal to become a Catholic—Not anxious to marry—Match suggested with Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar—Admiration of Waldemar of Denmark—Her appearance and portraits—Description of the sisters—Liveliness of the young people—Masques and tournaments—Practical jokes—Visits of Frederic William of Brandenburg—His attachment to Louise—Life at Rhenen.

ELIZABETH must have remained five years at Leyden, hardly longer, though M. Foucher de Careil indeed speaks of her having made the acquaintance of Anna van Schurmann there when she was about fifteen; but a casual reference in a letter from her father to his wife not many weeks before his death shows her to have been living at the Hague at that time. He is writing from Frankfort, where he was with the King of Sweden, and says:—

I am surprised you should not rather have lodged Dingley at the Commanderie where there is plenty of room, than so near your daughter in the women's quarter :

he might have been well content with the room Ashburnham had.

In the spring of that same year M. de Plessen had died, and this caused new arrangements to be contemplated at the Prinsenhof: the good man, however, was not easy to replace, and in the end his widow continued at the head of the establishment there, a new Governor being appointed for the young princes. The reference of the much-harassed king to his death is rather pathetic; he writes to his wife from the Camp, 8th March, 1632: "Le bon Mr. de Plessen est heureux d'être mort. Je souhaiterois de pouvoir avoir quelqu'un qui fût aussi [word omitted] près les enfans." Elizabeth, then in her fourteenth year, would be considered quite old enough to leave school; girls were looked upon as grown-up by that age or sooner; moreover, her father may have thought it would be a comfort to her mother while he was in the field to have her eldest daughter with her.

During her absence at Leyden a great sorrow had befallen the family in the death by drowning of the eldest brother Henry, the flower of the flock and his father's pride and constant companion. In the winter of 1629-30 he had gone with his father to the Zuyder Zee to see the Spanish galleons taken by the Dutch which had just been towed into the harbour. James Howell, who relates the accident in a letter to Lord Clifford (misdated 1623), said the King and Prince were crossing "for more frugality" in the common packet boat, other accounts state that they were in the King's own yacht; whichever it was, in the dusk

of the winter afternoon the vessel was run down ; the King swam out and was rescued, the young Prince, entangled in the wreckage, was half frozen half drowned before he could get clear, and sank with the choking cry, " Save me, father ! " a cry which the distressed father could never forget. Possibly he felt that his characteristic want of readiness and resource had paralysed him till too late. It was a heart-breaking sorrow to both parents, and fell very hardly on the mother, who had barely recovered from the birth of little Charlotte ; and no doubt it was a very grievous blow to his eldest sister, just old enough to realise the sadness of such a loss, and by temperament inclined to melancholy. Perhaps if she had been with her mother at that time the two would have drawn closer together in sympathy, for the elder Elizabeth must have recalled her own sorrow for her eldest brother snatched away in opening manhood.

The year that the young Elizabeth returned must have been a time of feverish anxiety. The Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus had come with a powerful army and undertaken the leadership of the Protestant cause, and Frederic had of course hastened to join his standard. Besides the inevitable fears of a devoted wife for her husband's safety, the Queen was distracted between hope and disappointment, for the interests of the Palatinate were not the only or the chief thing to be considered by the Swedes. For her even the Swedish successes were fraught with disappointment and disillusion, and with the death of the champion on the field of Lützen the hopes

built upon his enterprise were utterly wrecked ; for though the Swedes fought on, deprived of their head they were no longer a match for Tilly and Wallenstein. Within a few weeks this blow was followed by a far more crushing one in the death of Frederic. If ever man died of a broken heart, the Winter King surely did ; he was suffering from a fever of by no means a serious nature, and when the fatal news was brought him, he turned his face to the wall and made no more effort to live ; in utter weakness and discouragement he passed away, leaving a lost cause to be fought for by his young sons and his desolate Queen. Before her stood the further trial of bringing another, fatherless boy into the world, for within two months her thirteenth child, the fragile little Gustave, named by his father's wish after the Swedish hero, was born in winter and in sorrow.

Hers had been no mere political union, founded though it had been on reasons of State and expediency ; every year had deepened the affection the young pair felt for each other from the first, and sorrow shared had but tightened the bond. Together they had enjoyed the delights of the first happy years at Heidelberg ; all Elizabeth's sweetest memories were bound up with the young husband whose one thought had been to give her pleasure ; together they had gone forth upon their rash enterprise ; together they had endured failure and ruin, and through long years of exile and of the sickness of hope ever frustrated, she had stood loyally at his side, uttering no reproach, consoling and supporting

his more despondent temper. When they were apart almost daily letters were exchanged. Few would have wondered if the widowed Queen had shut herself up with her sorrow for the rest of her days.

But Elizabeth was made of sterner stuff ; till she recovered from the birth of Gustave she remained in seclusion, then she rallied her forces, and with the high spirit and fortitude characteristic of her race, took her place once more in the world, using every endeavour to forward the interests of her second son, now through the death of his father and brother become Elector Palatine, though as yet unacknowledged by the Empire. In him was now centred all his mother's ambition ; to him, ever her favourite, she now transferred all her hopes, her pride, her loyalty to the head of the House, and for him it was eminently desirable that she should entertain, should receive foreign guests of distinction who might be able to forward his views, should make new friends and keep up old, and use her own charm to bring the almost forlorn enterprise of her son before those who could aid him. She wore mourning indeed to the end of her days, and kept her presence chamber always hung with black velvet, as was noted by John Evelyn on a visit to the Hague nine years later. He records in his diary that he waited upon the Queen and Princesses and saw also Prince Maurice newly come out of Germany. He said it was a fasting day with the Queen for the death of her husband, but it was not the day of his death, for it was in July, and the King died the

19th of November, but it was one of her anniversaries which she always religiously observed.

So though it was under heavy shadow that the young Princess's school-days closed, her new life at the Hague was not to be a dull one. The only record of her own sorrow on her father's death is in a little letter of condolence written to her cousin Elizabeth Louise of Zweibrücken three years later on a similar bereavement. It is written in excellent, though rather antiquated French. I give it in translation :—

Rhenen, 3/13 Oct., 1635.

I cannot refrain from telling you with what grief I have learned the loss you have experienced in the death of your father, which I feel as much on your account as for the interest I have in it, certainly no little both in the honour of belonging to him, and the particular favours I have received from him. This, Mademoiselle, with the affection I bear you obliges me to beg you as one of your servants, to moderate the just sense you have of this affliction. I know its greatness by experience, which is still fresh in my memory. However, I will not trouble you by suggesting all the reasons which you already know, but will pray the Almighty to give you strength to bear it, which is the sole remedy which one can have, which I wish you, as I do all that could give you satisfaction, and should feel myself very happy if I could serve you in anything of which you would find me capable.*

This cousin became a very close friend of Elizabeth's in after years. On her return to the Hague Elizabeth was placed under the especial charge and

* *Briefe der Kinder des Winter Königs*, Heidelberger Historisches Taschenbuch.

chaperonage of Lady Vere, one of her mother's English suite. The house in which the exiled Court was now settled was a fine mansion belonging to a banished nobleman, Cornelius van der Myle.* They had at first occupied a palace belonging to Prince Frederic Henry, brother of the Stadthalter, the same in which they had stayed when they passed through the Hague on their bridal progress ; but when it appeared that their residence was likely to be permanent, they were moved into the one next door in which the wife of van der Myle still had rooms. It stood at the corner of the Lange Vorhout, then as now a long narrow grove of trees, with a broad drive down the centre and a promenade on either hand. The house, if not entirely pulled down, has been so completely transformed as to retain no recognisable features ; the site is now occupied by the Ministry of Finance. The long corridor with deep window-seats looking out on a courtyard at the back may have been part of the original building, but this is uncertain. Next to it stood—and still stands—the ugly Calvinist church in which Louise had been baptised, and in which the Queen sometimes attended service, though she still for some time retained her Anglican chaplain, Samson Jonson.

For a while the Queen had seemed utterly crushed by the sorrows which had fallen so thick upon her, but hers was a buoyant nature ; mourning passionately she was yet able to fling aside grief and throw herself with zest into fresh enterprises, able, too, to be easily

* *Green's Princesses of England.*

amused with the events of the passing hour. Writing to her old friend Sir Henry Wotton, after enlarging on some of her many perplexities and disappointments, she adds : " Yet am I still of my old wild humour to be as merry as I can." So though the Court was for long in mourning, it was in a scene of comparative gaiety that the young Elizabeth, with her graver temperament, her more studious tastes, was to grow up. She never seemed wholly in sympathy with her mother ; not improbably she, with youthful intolerance, may have judged her frivolous, even heartless, as she saw her in no long time after her loss re-enter the world, picking up once more the threads of daily life, laughing heartily at the comic side of things, at the pranks and jokes of her lively children or the antics of her pet monkeys, and not least at the oddities of some of those errant knights who came to offer their swords in the service of " the Queen of Hearts." " I am never without somebody to make me sport," she writes ; " when one goes another comes." Between her and her eldest daughter there was occasional friction, and on one or two occasions strained relations, yet they were good friends in the main, and the mother was always proud of Elizabeth's commanding talents and the high place she won in the estimation of learned men. She herself was a very cultivated woman, and enjoyed the society of clever people, but her tastes and her daughter's were in some points divergent ; she was an admirable linguist and loved reading history, poetry, or drama, but she had not the younger Elizabeth's gift for pro-

found and serious reflection, and we may believe was sometimes annoyed at her absence of mind. Though she had so tenderly sympathised with her husband's morbid and gloomy moods, she could not always make allowance for the melancholy temperament he had bequeathed to his eldest daughter.

The social position of the Queen of Bohemia at the Hague was, for an exile, a singularly brilliant one. She had always been a great favourite with her husband's uncle Maurice, and during his lifetime, as he was unmarried, was the principal lady at Court, and took the lead in all social functions. With the accession of Frederic Henry and his marriage, this was of necessity somewhat changed, but she and her daughters were still treated with the highest consideration.

The new Princess of Nassau had been Elizabeth's own Lady-in-Waiting, and though of distinguished, was not of royal birth. When Maurice lay dying he was very anxious to secure a legitimate heir for the Stadthaltership, for though nominally elective, he was desirous that by prescriptive right the succession should become hereditary in his family. He well knew that it would be hopeless to try to arrange an ambitious alliance for his brother, for Henry's attachment to Amelia de Solms was an open secret. Had it not been for the fear of Maurice's disapproval he would have declared himself long before. But now the Stadthalter felt his time was short ; he wanted to see his brother with a wife ; possibly his niece had interceded for the lovers ; she had always a heart

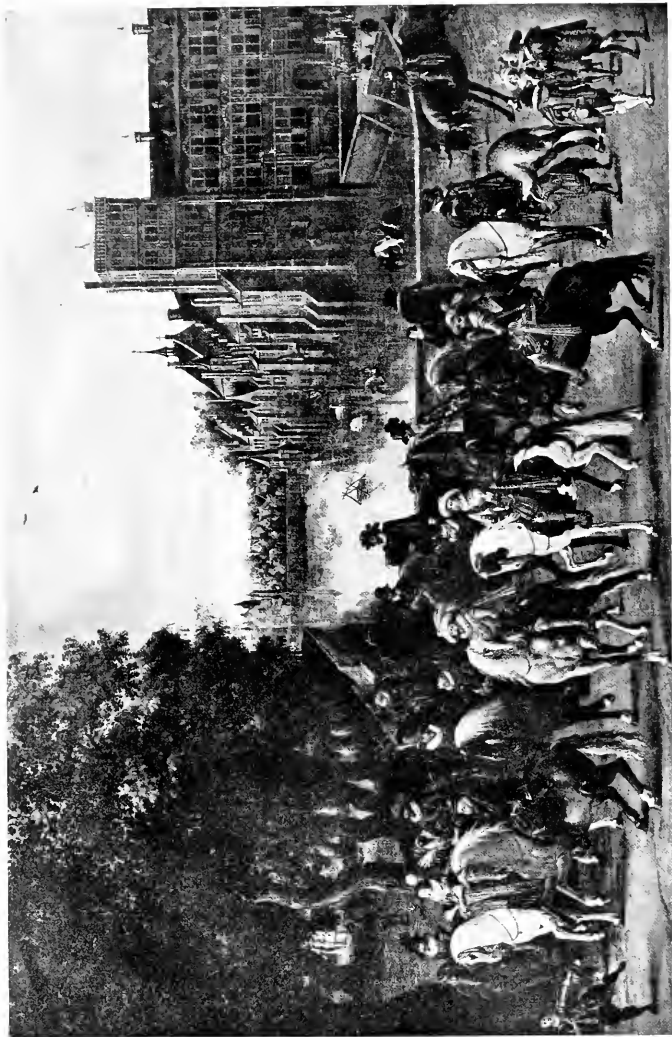


Photo. THE KING AND QUEEN OF BOHEMIA, RIDING IN THE BUTTENHOF WITH THE STAETHALER
from a painting by Paulus van Hillegaert. By permission of the Director of the Mauritshuis
F. Bruckmann, Munich

for such, and he not only withdrew all opposition, but desired that the marriage should take place without delay. So within a few weeks of Frederic Henry's appointment as his brother's successor, the former Maid-of-Honour found herself in a position analogous to that of Queen.*

It speaks volumes for the temper of both ladies that no shadow of rivalry seems to have clouded their intercourse in their changed positions. Once indeed it appeared both mothers were anxious to secure the hand of Charles II of England for a daughter, but if there were intrigue there was no rupture, and they remained for years on terms of affectionate friendship, Amelia's children growing up in cousinly intercourse with Elizabeth's younger ones. At the time the eldest Princess Palatine came home Amelia had been some seven or eight years married, and her eldest boy William was already betrothed to the little Princess Royal of England. The little girls, who were younger, were still in the nursery, and of course not companions for the Princess, but were pets and playthings, especially the eldest, Louise Henriette, for whom she always had a warm affection.

She had for a little time the companionship of her brothers, but not very long after her father's death Charles, now Elector Palatine, was sent to his uncle and godfather in England. He was at this time the most accomplished of the young Princes, not a whit behind Rupert in learning, and far before him in

* *Court Life in the Dutch Republic*, by Baroness Suzette van Zuylen van Nyevelt.

social graces ; Sir Thomas Rowe, responding to the mother's commendation of the lad' to his friendly auspices, wrote : " It is not the first time your Majesty has confessed to me your affection for the Prince Elector, but now I must admire and approve your judgment, for never was there fairer subject of love." * The two half-grown boys, Rupert and Maurice, were in the judgment of Clarendon when they first went to England, somewhat rude and shy, especially Maurice, and Rupert had at home won for himself the nickname of Robert le Diable from his hot and hasty temper.† With him Elizabeth had a great deal in common, and either now or when he was at home for a time later he and she worked together at the chemical experiments referred to by De Sorbière.

She was still very young when proposals of marriage were made to her by Ladislas IV, King of Poland. He had ascended the Polish throne in 1632, and had that same year laid claim to that of Sweden in succession to Gustavus Adolphus, as the male heir of the House of Vasa, but since no salic law obtained in Sweden, that crown descended to Gustavus's daughter Christine. Ladislas was already forty, and had been married before, but acted like a hot-headed boy, according to Langenich's *History of the Prussian Polish Provinces under Ladislas IV*, from which Madame Blaze de Bury quotes. In January, 1633, he sent his deputy Zawadski to England to negotiate the matter with Charles I, as the young lady's uncle

* Green, *Princesses of England*.

† *Rupert, Prince Palatine*, Eva Scott.

and guardian, and received an encouraging response, provided that she was permitted to retain her own religion. Personally Ladislas would have been quite willing to agree to this stipulation, nor would the Pope have refused a dispensation, but there was the further difficulty of the religion of offspring, and the question was deferred until the Diet of Warsaw in November, 1635. The proposal provoked a most stormy scene, the Poles violently refusing to receive a heretic. The middle-aged lover protested and even wept in vain; the Poles were rigid, and no less rigid was Elizabeth in her firm refusal even to consider a change of religion. Not only was it the one she had practised all her life, and in which she had found all the spiritual influence she knew, but her family had ever been foremost in the Protestant cause, and for its sake her father had lost crown and patrimony; for her to change would have seemed a treachery to his memory. Her resolve had her mother's entire support, though the Queen must have been anxious to see her portionless daughters suitably settled. She had the approval, too, of her eldest brother, who wrote from England: "I am most infinitely glad to hear that your Majesty is so pleased with my sister's behaviour. I pray God she may never do otherwise."

The King of Poland, however, was not so easily to be put off; the next year he despatched Zawadski once more to England with instructions to suggest that Queen Henrietta Maria might invite her niece on a visit and influence her in favour of the Catholic faith. Whether the invitation was sent or not we

do not know, but if so it was not accepted, and Elizabeth would have been a difficult subject to influence. Whether Ladislás had seen his proposed bride or had fallen in love with the report of her wonderful attainments, he showed considerable ardour, but without the consent of his subjects he could not or dared not act, and the long-protracted negotiations made her relations in England doubt of the *bona fides* of his intentions. Charles Louis wrote to his mother 16th May, 1636 :—

Concerning the Polish business I know not what to believe of it, for the K of P hath engaged himself so far in it, both to the K my uncle and to your M that it were an affront to you both and a shame to himself, if he now leaves it, for, in all his letters to the K he still shews a great desire to the match, and he needs not the States of Poland's consent to do it ; but it seemeth he seeketh all means to do it with their good will, and for that wishes she may be of their religion.

In another letter he refers to the suggestion of Henrietta Maria's intervention with the remark : " The Q is so discreet she will not meddle with it." In June he writes : " I see no reason why one should think the K of Poland should not mean it really." *

But, despite his tears and protestations, Ladislás would not venture to marry without the consent of the Diet, and after long languishing the negotiations were broken off. What Elizabeth's personal feeling in the matter was we cannot tell, nor indeed whether she had ever seen her proposed bridegroom. Many

* *Royal Letters*, Sir George Bromley.

years later she referred to it in answer to a letter containing a rumour that she had become a Catholic ; she assures her correspondent there is no truth in the report, adding with *naïveté*, " Since I would not do it when I might have secured a husband and a crown, it is not likely I would do it now." Perhaps with advancing years she felt her loneliness and lack of position, and this was the only definite proposal that was entertained for her. Matches were not easy to arrange for the Palatinate Princesses ; their pretensions were high, their fortunes low, and attractive as they were, only one of the four made a good match. There was indeed a suggestion made a few years later by the Earl of Leicester that an alliance between the young Elector Palatine and Bernard of Saxe-Weimar might be cemented by Elizabeth's hand, but the fall of Bernard carried the scheme into the limbo of lost things, and no hint transpires of Elizabeth's feelings in the matter. There was a young Count Waldemar of Denmark who at one time paid her some attention, but the only mention of this is in her mother's correspondence with Sir Thomas Rowe, and it came to nothing.

Elizabeth was not the type of woman for whom marriage is the one end and aim of life ; if it is disrespectful to describe her as " a born old maid," one may say of her that she was of those who have a natural vocation for spinsterhood or the cloister ; probably she was really happier in preserving the independence of mind and life which suited her. She does not seem to have either felt or inspired romantic

attachments, but she had not a little of her mother's genius for friendships with men, and formed several strong and lasting ties of this nature. If she lacked the charm of a capricious woman, she had a steadfast loyalty on which her friends could always count.

She is spoken of by contemporary writers as handsome, but what princess in her teens does not enjoy that reputation? Descartes, indeed, waxes eloquent about her "angelic looks"; but he is a biased witness, being so dazzled with the charms of her mind. The portraits that have come down bear conflicting testimony. The one by Honthorst in the National Portrait Gallery represents a decidedly handsome woman with regular features, and a countenance of much intellectuality and dignity. Those in the Heidelberg Castle Museum are markedly inferior; one gives her a set, wooden look, hardly consonant with the spirituality of her mind: but probably the fault lay with the artist rather than the sitter. The three portraits of the Princess here given show clearly the same type of face at different periods of life.

She was very tall, and in her youth somewhat slim and angular, growing stout in later life. Sophie says she was considered handsome. "She had black hair, bright complexion, brown and brilliant eyes, thick and dark eyebrows, a good-shaped forehead, well-formed and red lips, with very good teeth, her nose aquiline and thin." Sophie has cruelly immortalised the redness of this otherwise good nose; never very strong, and apt, from too great devotion to sedentary pursuits, to suffer from indigestion, in her young days

Elizabeth's long nose was prone to take an unbecoming tint, and it is a very human touch in this philosophic Princess that she took it to heart so much. Sophie relates that when Louise reminded her that it was time to repair to the Queen's apartments, she would ask in despair: "Would you have me go with this nose?" to which her saucy sister would make reply, "Well, you can't wait till you can get another one." * Her eyes, like her younger brother Edward's, were a little too round for beauty, though full of intelligence; and her thick, straight eyebrows gave her a rather stern look which belied the gentleness of her nature.

She was entitled to a heritage of good looks on both sides; the Palatinate princes had been noted for beauty for many generations, and her father was no exception. He and his Stuart bride were a singularly handsome pair, but their eldest daughter, though sufficiently comely, seems to have lacked that nameless charm which her mother inherited in good measure from her beautiful grandmother, the Queen of Scots, and handed down to two at least of her four daughters. It was charm of mind rather than of person that distinguished the eldest Princess and won her an enthusiastic admiration from such men as Descartes and her cousin Frederic William.

Her sister Louise, who, though four years younger, was emancipated from the schoolroom and followed her to the Hague no long time after, was in many ways a great contrast: not quite so tall, so dignified

* *Memoiren der Herzogin Sophie*, Köcher.

in carriage, nor so correct in feature, she was softer-looking, more graceful and more pleasing, with great charm both of countenance and manner, and a beautiful complexion. Very merry she was too, and gifted with a ready and witty tongue. According to Sophie, she was wonderfully untidy, her clothes looking as if they had been thrown on with a pitchfork, yet she had that nameless grace so often denied to the orderly, and, with her eye for form and colour, no doubt her garments were harmonious if carelessly worn. Sociable and lively, her devotion to her art kept her from becoming frivolous, for she painted at every available moment with enthusiasm. Her gift for catching likenesses was remarkable, and she could paint excellent portraits from memory; her methods seem to have been rather slapdash than painstaking, for her mother's old friend, Lord Harrington, once compared her to the painter of old of whom it is related that, exasperated by his inability to paint the foam on the bit of a champing horse, he flung his brush at the canvas and achieved his effect by accident.

Henriette was very unlike both sisters, and seemed to have cast back to her maternal grandmother Anne of Denmark for her complexion of lilies and roses and her fair hair of the tint which the French call *blond cendré*. Her nose, which was well formed, was as white as snow in the coldest weather, and her white forehead was set off by dark, well-pencilled eyebrows. The shape of her face was a perfect oval, her mouth very pretty, and she had gentle, dovelike eyes. Her hands and arms too were exquisitely shaped, and her



ELIZABETH WITH HUNTING SPEAR
*From a painting of the School of Honthorst
By permission of the Librarian of the Bodleian, Oxford*

feet very small and slender. She was a gentle creature of a most sweet disposition, and quite the beauty of the family. Less gifted intellectually than her sisters, her tastes were in other lines ; she excelled in needle-work, and spent many contented hours at her embroidery frame or in the stillroom concocting *compôtes* and cakes and all manner of delicate confections. Certainly not one of Elizabeth's daughters was idle ; every one of the four inherited in some measure her energy and vitality.

Little Sophie did not come home to complete the party till 1641 ; she was then but eleven, and became the pet and plaything of her sisters. In spite of the strictures of the Princess of Nassau, she must have been a pretty little creature, a slim sprite with fair hair curling naturally, and a fair if rather pale complexion. To her great joy she overheard some of her mother's English guests predicting that she would one day rival her handsome sisters. Altogether the four must have formed an interesting and well-contrasted group.

Of them all Louise was her mother's favourite ; less shy than Elizabeth, with more readiness and aplomb, and ever bubbling over with laugh and jest. She would be the one to take the lead in getting up the concerts, masques, and theatrical entertainments in which they all delighted, devising costumes and scenery which Henriette's clever fingers would help to carry out. Elizabeth was always ready to join and bear her part, but a little from a sense of duty, her mind straying to her beloved books the while, for

Sophie says: "She was often very absent, which made us all laugh at her"—good-natured laughter, for the brothers and sisters were all excellent friends. The performance of *Jason and Medea* in French has been recorded both in the Queen's letters and in Sophie's memoirs. It was a great event to her, for she had but lately returned, and her elder sisters thought her too young to be entrusted with a part. So eager was she, and so retentive her memory, that she learned the whole play by heart, and, having repeated it without mistake, was allowed to play Nérine, which she did with great applause. Elizabeth, an excellent linguist and possessed of a good memory, would be a useful and reliable member of the company, but was probably too shy to shine as an actress.

The three elder boys spent much time at the English Court, where their uncle Charles was anxious to do all he could for his sister's children, short of plunging his own country into the vortex of the Thirty Years' War. They came and went, for there was a good deal of intercourse between London and the Hague. When they were at home the fun was fast and furious, for they were wild, high-spirited lads, especially Maurice, who on one occasion so disturbed the peaceable citizens that he was requested to withdraw for a time, and the Queen sent him with Philip to Paris to study there. They were given to practical jokes, sometimes of a rather unrefined nature, and at the carnival delighted to run about masked and in disguise, talking to and mystifying every one they met. There is a curious little pencil drawing preserved in the Museum at

Leyden, done by the Queen, of herself and her husband and some of their suite masked, standing at the corner of a street at the Hague. She entered into all their amusements with a perhaps too indulgent temper. It is related that a deputation of English Puritans coming over in 1635 to offer to the Queen "a godly condolence," retired deeply disgusted by the "songs, dances, hallooings and other jovialities" of Charles, Rupert, Maurice, and Edward.* A year or two later the two eldest, having come over from England to prepare for Charles's attempt to recover his patrimony, attended a tournament at the Hague, dressed as Moors and mounted on white horses. By their skill as well as by their striking get-up they outshone all the company.

Dances were frequent at the Binnenhof under Amelia's rule; the palace in the woods had not yet been built for her delight, and their summer resort was at Hounslersdyk. An old print of a few years later represents one of these Court functions at which a minuet is being danced by the exiled English King Charles II. No doubt our Elizabeth was well fitted to pace with stateliness through galliard or pavane, for dancing was then quite a serious business. Besides the brothers, Elizabeth's favourite cousin, Frederic William of Brandenburg, spent a good deal of time with them. He was sent in 1634 to study at Leyden, and especially recommended to the kindness of his aunt, with whom he often stayed for weeks together. Some writers have imagined an attachment

* *Rupert, Prince Palatine*, Scott.

between him and Elizabeth, but there does not seem to have been anything beyond a steady affection as of brother and sister; they were nearly the same age and had spent much of their early childhood together, and between them was remarkable community of tastes and interest. He developed into a highly educated and intellectual man, and in his plans for his country Elizabeth would warmly sympathise.

For Louise Hollandine he seems to have felt a budding attachment, fostered by both mothers, but this coming to the ears of the Elector George William, roused great anger, he having no idea of a portionless bride for his heir. He took prompt measures to stamp it out, recalling the young man at once to Berlin, and a few years later Frederic William wooed and won another Louise, Louise Henriette, daughter of the Stadthalter, who was quite a child when he was wandering in the woods and by the river, paying court to Louise Hollandine.*

The summers were not spent in the town, but in a charming country house which the King of Bohemia had built only a few years before his death on the banks of the Rhine at Rhenen, a small town or big village, lying midway between Arnheim and Culemburg. Here life could be lived free of the burdensome etiquette of the Court, and at a less expense. The house stood upon the rampart just above the moat which then encircled the town, close under the shadow of the majestic church tower, separated from the broad river by a few low-lying marshy fields, and

* *Court Life*—"Myevelt." Conf. Everett Green, *Princesses*.



THE KING'S HOUSE, AT RHENEN: FROM THE RIVER
From an old print. By permission of Doctor K. Jesse, Curator of the Archives, Rhenen

raised well above the mists. Westward the shores are flat, broken with the rows of Lombardy poplars characteristic of Holland ; but eastward rise the wooded hills towards Arnheim, with lovely varied scenery of glade and thicket, affording scope for the hunting in which the Queen still delighted, but in which neither Elizabeth nor Sophie cared to take part. All, however, loved the free open-air life, the boating, the fishing, the swimming, the relaxation of all ceremony. Here they might roam at will in the fields or along the raised causeway by the river without the escort of governess or lady-in-waiting, with only the protection of brothers or cousin, the party frequently reinforced by some of the Nassau cousins from the Hague.

Ceremony at any time does not seem to have been very rigidly enforced to judge by two letters written from Whitehall by Charles to his mother on the subject of a certain Mrs. Crofts, a dismissed Lady-in-Waiting.

WHITEHALL, 24th May, 1637.

MADAM,—Though I am assured your Majesty maketh no doubt of my civil carriage towards Mrs. Crofts, because she was your servant and you commanded it, yet I hear she is not pleased with it, and hath sent her complaints beyond sea. I do not know whether they are come to your Majesty's ears, but I easily believe it, because she told my Lord Craven that I used her like a stranger, and did not speak to her before the King and Queen ; yet I think I may truly say I spoke more with her since she came into England than all my lifetime before. If your Majesty did consider the ill opinion I had, both before and during my sister's friendship, of her, besides the quarrel we had a

little before I went from Rhenen, about Cave and Horne, you would not think that I resented her ill carriage to your Majesty, only since she is fallen out with my sister, who now sees her error. . . .

This is followed by another about a month later :—

. . . I cannot tell your Majesty particularly what discourse Mrs. Crofts makes of them she left beyond sea, but I heard the third or fourth night she was arrived, she gave the characters of all of them at the Hague to my Lady Carlisle ; which I heard by one who overheard them, but would not tell me any particulars, only said most of them were well-stitched and her censure sharp enough. I did not hear what counsel she gave my brother Rupert ; but he told me that the other day she would not look upon him. It now is in your power never to be troubled with her any more ; for (though I hear she promised you to the contrary) if she once more returns, you will never be rid of her. As for me I will do her all the help I can, if she will stay ; for I wish her no other ill than that she may not return to your M. : let her do here as much mischief as she can. There is spread all over the town, and every one maketh their judgments of it according to their several affections, that my Lady Leveston hath given my sister a box on the ear before twenty people in the Prince of Orange's garden, and did not so much as ask her pardon for it. Your Majesty, I believe, will not take it well of those that write over every foolish thing that happens at your Court, for here they always make the worst of it : I cannot but believe it was in jest, seeing I heard nothing of it from herself.*

The sister here referred to can hardly have been Elizabeth ; neither the foolish and unsuitable friend-

* *Bromley Letters.*

ship nor the great liberty taken with her seems consonant with her age or character. She was at this time in her twentieth year ; it seems more likely of careless, easy-going Louise, four years younger and never greatly standing on her dignity.

More and more time seems to have been spent at Rhenen, and letters are frequently dated thence. Of the house where they spent those free and easy summers not one stone is left standing upon the foundations, which can just be traced above the moat. The site is now occupied by a restaurant, and, standing on a broad balcony opening from one of the upstairs rooms, the pilgrim finds himself looking away across the orchards and clustering trees which fill the now dry moat to the broad, shining Rhine, a scene on which Elizabeth's dreaming eyes must many a time have rested. One cannot but wish she had given some description of it in her letters, or of the charming walks up the steep village street that lay behind, to the hill crowned with a windmill so old it may well have stood there in her day. The inn which replaced her home was for long called the " King of Bohemia," but its name has recently been altered to the " King of Denmark."

It seems remarkable that this merry family life was led under the ban of a long and almost hopeless exile. Of all the children, only Elizabeth seems to have realised or grieved over their position : their old home not only out of reach, but devastated and destroyed, their fortunes nil, prospects of worthy careers for the boys or suitable matches for the girls more than

problematical. Moreover, during all these years the Thirty Years' War was dragging out its interminable length ; while from England disquieting news was beginning to come of the threatened troubles so nearly concerning them, for to their uncle there they looked as a mainstay. Yet what an atmosphere of gay, easy insouciance breathes through letters and memoirs ! When Sophie mentions their poverty, it is with a jest that they frequently dined on pearls and diamonds, as jewels had to be pledged to obtain the necessaries of life. For a while, however, though remittances were scanty, credit was still to be obtained, and they lived like the grasshopper of the fable.

So, while hopes of restoration languished, these boys and girls sang and acted, laughed and romped, as though they had no more serious concern in life than to pass the idle hours.



THE KING'S HOUSE AT RHEUEN : FROM THE STREET
From an old print in the Archives at Rheuen. By permission

CHAPTER V

AN INTELLECTUAL FRIENDSHIP

Introduction of M. Descartes at the Lange Vorhout—Literary society surrounding the Queen of Bohemia—Sketch of Descartes—His appreciation of the Princess—Attitude of the Queen—Letter from Elizabeth—Visits to Endegeest—Rupert's aid in study of chemistry—Correspondence with Descartes.

IN the winter of 1640 a new interest dawned upon Elizabeth's horizon, one more consonant with her serious bent than the round of amusement, the masques, the plays, the tournaments in which her brothers and sisters took pleasure. A visitor was one day introduced at the reception of the Queen of Bohemia, M. René Descartes, not unknown to the Princess by reputation. She had already read some of his philosophical writings, and had found in them a new principle which so appealed to her that she declared she would cast aside all that she had hitherto learned and begin to build anew from the very foundation.

The Queen also was prepared to extend a cordial welcome to the new-comer. She read everything and could discuss everything, and Philosophy, particularly in its new guise of Cartesianism, was rapidly becoming the ruling fashion at the Hague. Her drawing-room was the resort of many clever men :

Constantine Huyghens, *Sieur de Zuylichem*, secretary to the *Stadthalter*, and an amateur poet of some distinction, with his gifted son, a poet also, and an astronomer, the discoverer of Saturn's rings, were frequent visitors. He had but lately lost his charming wife, a daughter of van Baerle. The two brothers, Christopher and Achatius Dhona, were old friends and adherents of the Palatinate House, and had followed them into exile ; they were both distinguished scholars, educated at Heidelberg University, studying later in France and Italy. Achatius was a warm friend of Descartes, and also of the Princess Elizabeth, keeping up his friendship with her long after the death of the Philosopher. Another disciple of the new Philosophy was the Queen's chaplain, Samson Jonson, whose enthusiasm led him to mix himself in the quarrel between Descartes and the Calvinist divine Dr. Voet, or Voëtius, as he was called in learned circles. This probably was at the bottom of the charges of socinianism and atheism later brought against him when the English Parliament demanded that the States-General should require his dismissal. One writer ascribes the introduction to him, one to de Pollot, Gentleman-in-Waiting to Frederic Henry, a personal friend of Descartes and a distinguished figure in society at the Hague, another to the Dhona brothers. The question is of no moment ; there stands the Philosopher, making his bow before the Queen and her bevy of handsome daughters, and forging all unconscious the first link in a historic friendship which was to be the eldest princess's highest title to honour.

No Diogenes in his tub this : a man of breeding, a soldier and a travelled citizen of the world, well able to hold his own in any drawing-room. Goethe has commented on the double nature, courtier and idealist, which met in him. "A man of the world, he never neglected any of the events that might happen in society ; not a royal marriage or christening, not a coronation, a jubilee, or a siege, but at all costs he must witness it with his own eyes and be able to talk of it with his equals. But this was counterbalanced by his practice of retreat—*Rückkehr in sich selbst*."

He had but lately come into the neighbourhood, having bought the charming little property of Endegeest, some three miles beyond the north-western gate of Leyden, and so short a distance from the capital that it was quite easy to spend half a day there, returning in the evening. He had been living already some years in Holland, having come into that country in search of a wider tolerance for the expression of opinion than he could find at home, a quest in which to some extent he was disappointed, for the Protestant divines were no more tolerant of a free thought that outran their own than were the Catholic schoolmen ; and, though his personal freedom was not meddled with, he had to endure scurrilous attacks from the professor of Theology, Voëtiüs, which he was by no means inclined to endure with equanimity.*

His life up to his thirty-fifth year had been one of great variety of experience. He came of a well-descended family settled in Rennes, but not of Breton

* *Descartes*, Mahaffy.

ancestry, and himself enjoyed the title, had he cared to use it, of Seigneur de Perron, from an estate he inherited in Touraine, but subsequently sold. His father belonged to the rank known as Noblesse de Robe, persons who held office in local administration, and took rank between the Haute noblesse and the bourgeoisie occupied in trade. René Descartes, as became a philosopher, cared little for titles or distinctions, and preferred to be known as plain M. Descartes. He was educated at the Jesuit college of La Flèche, and always retained a great respect for the fathers and a high opinion of their merits as pedagogues. Being a sickly and delicate lad, the customary early rising was not in his case insisted on, and during the years he spent at school he formed the habit of lying late in bed, occupying his mind the while with serious philosophic reflection ; he always said in after life he found no such undisturbed time for fruitful meditation as those quiet morning hours. His mental bias showed itself at an early age, and before he went to school his father dubbed him his young Philosopher. An event of his school life which left a vivid memory was the murder of Henri IV, the heart of the King being sent for interment in the church of La Flèche, and he being one of the twenty-four young gentlemen sent out on horseback to receive it.

Quiet and studious boy as he was, he might have been expected to develop a vocation for the cloister, but such was not his bent. The studies which interested him most deeply were mathematics and philosophy ; physical science he entered upon later.

He had an absorbing taste for music, fostered, after he had left La Flèche for Paris, by intercourse with the eminent musician and mathematician, the Abbé Mersenne, with whom he formed a close and lasting friendship. In the restless period of opening manhood he was fascinated by the mystical teachings of the Rosicrucians, but they retained no long hold of his clear and precise intellect.

Strangely divided between the contemplative and the active life, and with health fairly re-established, he left Paris to serve as a volunteer under Maurice of Nassau, to whose standard many young men of different nationalities flocked, since he was one of the most distinguished commanders of the day. For two years he performed garrison duty at Breda, then, whether weary of the monotony or, as some said, disgusted at the treatment meted to the Remonstrants, and especially the execution of Barneveldt, he threw up the service of the States-General and joined the Imperial forces at the beginning of the Thirty Years' War. Oddly enough he was in the army that besieged Prague and drove out the Winter King, little thinking how in future years he was to give his sympathy and service to that unfortunate King's daughter.

Soldiering he had adopted principally as a means of seeing the world and becoming familiar with the manners and customs of various peoples ; in itself the life did not appeal to him, and during the enforced leisure of winter quarters at Neuburg he devoted himself to deep thought and study of the questions that had always exercised his mind. This issued in the

discovery of that leading principle which became the basis of his philosophy, and from that moment he resolved to give up a military career and devote himself to working out and expounding his system.

Though remaining always a steadfast Catholic, if not an entirely orthodox one, he realised that his writings were almost sure to bring him into conflict with his Church, a thing he was most anxious to avoid, not, as some have thought, from insincerity or cowardice, but because, like so many thinkers since his day, he strove to reconcile the workings of his own independent mind with loyal attachment to the faith in which he lived and died. His declared intention was to avoid the domain of Theology, but this, though very well in theory, proved impossible in practice, since he based his conception of the universe on the intuitive knowledge of God, and fought against the traditional assumptions of the old Scholasticism. Holland seemed the safest place for him to take up his abode in, for there the long arm of the Church would not reach his person, and he seems to have hoped that if he could avoid being silenced as Galileo had been, he might with time get his views to prevail and bring them into harmony with those of the Church. His attitude with regard to the Astronomer was peculiar : he avoided espousing his cause or admitting the validity of his propositions ; neither did he deny them, but rather blinked them by a quibble about the stationariness of a passenger in a moving coach, for he was resolved not to come into conflict with his religious superiors. In fact, he rather skimmed than



Photo.

Levy et ses Fils

RENÉ DESCARTES

From a painting by Bourdon in the Louvre

studied Galileo's arguments, and gave them little weight.* Somewhat to his surprise he found himself branded as an atheist by his Calvinist antagonists, and though he took to himself the consolation that the indignation of the Protestants against him might go far to reconcile his own Church to his views, he felt acutely the unpleasantness of inimical surroundings and withdrew to Endegeest, a peremptory order from the Prince of Orange having failed to put his enemy to silence for more than a short while.

At the time of his presentation to the Queen of Bohemia and her daughters he was a man of forty-four, lean and rather harsh featured, with piercing eyes under bushy eyebrows ; though his appearance was scarcely pleasing, his manners had the well-bred suavity of a courtier, and he was always well though plainly dressed. In the midst of the sparkling and brilliant badinage, the swift interchange of compliment and repartee which went on round the Queen and her second daughter, the lively Louise, the Philosopher did not fail to recognise the unusual intellectual gifts of the elder Princess, retiring though she was. In spite of her shyness she mustered courage to express to him some of the deep interest and admiration she felt for his writings. Perhaps they withdrew a little into the embrasure of a window overlooking the shady trees of the Vorhout, where they could exchange questions and explanations on the graver subjects that interested both so deeply, and Elizabeth could ask for fuller light on many things that puzzled her in

* *Descartes*, Mahaffy.

a philosophy then so new. Her very difficulties showed him the grasp of her mind ; she was not one who could accept the surface values of words nor assume comprehension when she was not verily certain ; she must understand down to the very foundations and make sure for herself of every step of the way before she would let herself go. She would follow no man's teaching blindly.

From the first Descartes appreciated fully this attitude of mind in the young Princess. In a confidential letter to his friend de Pollot, he speaks of Elizabeth's "generous modesty joined to a breadth of mind superior to that of Messieurs les Docteurs who take the opinions of Aristotle for the rule of truth, rather than the evidence of reason." He often said of her that she seized, as it were, by intuition, and what was more, thoroughly grasped, principles presented to her which would take him hours of laborious explanation to make clear to a masculine intelligence. She certainly combined in an exceptional degree the swift intuition characteristic of a clever woman with the solidity of a man's understanding. Descartes's enthusiasm was, however, rather laughed at by his contemporaries. De Sorbière, physician to Louis XIV, exclaims satirically in the gossiping memoirs he wrote of his sojourn in Holland between the years 1642-7 : "Bless the good man ! he thinks only one man and one woman capable of entering into his doctrines, the physician Regius and the Princess of Bohemia." *

The attraction was mutual, and the visits of Des-

* *Sorberiana*.

cartes to the Hague became frequent. M. Victor de Swarte, who entitles his book on the friendship, *Descartes : Directeur Spirituel*, suggests that it did not altogether find favour with the Queen of Bohemia, but he quotes no authority for his view, and letters do not lend it any support. The Queen herself had too much experience of masculine friendships to suppose there was necessarily any risk of her young daughter of two-and-twenty forming an undesirable attachment to this man of double her age, and there was no appearance of what in modern times would be called flirtation. Strong as the liking between them grew, neither the Princess nor the Philosopher were people of amatory tendencies, and their friendship stood serene on a firm basis of respect and intellectual sympathy.

The elder Elizabeth had done her best to make all her daughters cultivated women, and she was proud of the talent of the eldest and the recognition it won from one of the cleverest men in Europe. Possibly Elizabeth's absorption in her new friend and in the pursuit of philosophy may have a little outrun her mother's desires, but neither the evidence of letters nor the probabilities deduced from the Queen's own character and tastes render it likely she put any hindrance in the way. Lover of society and of admiration as she undoubtedly was, she was not frivolous. A clever woman, a great reader, and quite *dans le mouvement* in all the newer thought of the day, she liked nothing better than to adorn her receptions with men of wit and learning, and would be proud of the un-

usual endowments which made her daughter so attractive to a savant of European fame.

To her no doubt, as to the younger members of the family, Philosophy was but the fringe of the garment of life, one of many interests in a world crowded with varied pursuits ; while to Descartes and his pupil it was the deepest and most absorbing preoccupation, and they would be lost to the world of laughter and jest about them, in searching discussions and deep studies, possibly sometimes to the annoyance of the Queen, who well understood the maxim of the world—"nothing in excess," and would have let her daughter dabble rather than swim. Elizabeth, however, was of those who hunger and thirst after knowledge as the saints after righteousness, and she could not take her philosophy in moderation ; she longed to read the riddle of the universe, and if this man could teach her she would sit at his feet oblivious of the calls to come and take her part in dance or madrigal or in helping to entertain her mother's other guests.

She did try to rouse herself from her dreaming, however, and conscientiously bear her part in these mundane duties, as a letter of hers to her friend, written from Rhenen in June, 1643, shows:—

"The life which I am obliged to lead" (she writes in apology) "leaves me hardly disposition nor time to acquire the habit of meditation according to your rule. Sometimes the interests of my family which I ought not to neglect, sometimes conversations and complaisances which I cannot avoid, lower this weak mind of mine with weariness or vexation that it is rendered useless for a long while, which

will I hope excuse my stupidity in not grasping the idea by which we may judge how the soul (without extent and immaterial) can move the body."

Sometimes visits were paid to the Philosopher's home at Endegeest. De Sorbière recounts with much gusto that it became quite the fashion for ladies of position at the Hague, amongst them the Princess Palatine, to get up little parties to visit the savant at his country house—"disguised as bourgeoises," adds the gossip, but this probably means no more than that they travelled simply by barge or sailing boat without any ceremony; coaches were usually in waiting to convey them home again. De Sorbière's attempt to throw an air of scandalous intrigue over the visits is manifestly absurd. The Princess Palatine was of an immaculate discretion; gossip, later busy with her sister Louise, who had much of the mother's heedlessness, never save in this instance presumes to touch her. Very probably the party included Elizabeth's official chaperon, Lady Vere. Madame Huyghens, who shared with her husband the warm friendship of Descartes, and was a woman of considerable cultivation, would have been an ideal matron for the occasion, but to the great grief of her family and friends had died quite young only a few years before. It is doubtful whether Mademoiselle van Schurmann would be of the party; she and the Philosopher were not the best of friends.

It must have been a pleasant journey, whether by road or river. The Rhine here is broad and silvery, slow-moving compared with its rapid career through

the hill country of Germany ; wide pastures, where the black and white cattle graze, stretch on either hand, diversified with groves and thickets, and above the trees the great sails of windmills are slowly turning. Endegeest lies a little off the road which leads from Leyden to the sea-coast and the dunes at Katwijk. The avenue which connects its wrought-iron gates with the main road is shaded by pollarded oaks so old they may well have witnessed the passing of Elizabeth to visit her friend. The gates themselves, with their delicate tracery, in which the name Endegeest is gracefully entwined, have all the appearance of sixteenth or seventeenth-century work. The small, well-wooded park is wonderfully unaltered, considering that an asylum for the mentally afflicted has recently been erected on the portion facing the road, leaving the little château happily intact, just as it was when Descartes received his friends there. The house is of very simple design, with a round turret on each side, a semicircular flight of steps leads up to the front door, and a broad passage, with good-sized rooms on either hand, cuts straight through to the garden front. Each of these rooms has three windows, with a little balcony to the middle one ; and what was probably the *salon* is still hung with gobelin tapestry, said to have been there in Descartes' time, its colours softened rather than faded. Here we may picture Elizabeth seated on the deep window cushions, looking out on the flower garden and across the smooth, shining moat to the peaceful landscape beyond, while she laid some of her perplexities before her mentor. On the opposite



Photo

ENDEGEEST
from a photograph

P. J. van Breda Friesman, Leyden

side of the hall was the *salle à manger*, with a fine ceiling panelled in wood. These were the reception rooms. Descartes' own study was in one of the turrets on the upper floor, commanding a view over the woodland to the windmills by the river and the towers of Leyden. Adjoining this was his laboratory, where he used to point to his chemical retorts and appliances for dissections, saying: "These are my books." *

Perhaps refreshments were partaken of in the *salle à manger*, or more probably, when the visits were in summer time, a "refection," as it was called, consisting of syrup, fruit, and manchets of white bread, would be served in an arbour. This was the meal which in the seventeenth century took the place of our afternoon tea, and was a welcome interlude between an eleven o'clock dinner and a late supper. Though a recluse, M. Descartes was by no means an ascetic; his house was charmingly furnished and his household served him well. De Sorbière witnesses to the excellence of his cook. All things, both in house and grounds, were admirably ordered, and the master seems to have had the gift of attaching his servants to his person, for he rarely changed them. There were orchards, and the park, with beautiful groups of beeches, sloped down to the river; while close to the house was a small *parterre* laid out in Dutch fashion, where the Philosopher liked to tend his favourite flowers.

The valet who waited on him for many years, a man

* Descartes, *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

named de Gillot, became quite a companion and secretary, and on his master's death set up as a teacher of mathematics in Leyden.*

Had propriety permitted it, no doubt Descartes would have preferred to receive the visits of his Princess alone, for one of his reasons for establishing himself in so retired a spot was the desire he had to evade the intrusive attentions of curious visitors who, attracted by his wide fame, took the freedom of calling on him, and at Endegeest he was far enough from the Hague to expect to escape society unless he sought it himself. Solitude for much of his day was a necessity for him. His study was never greatly in books ; he was for so learned a man no great reader. His principles were worked out in the processes of his own mind, and the chief part of his knowledge acquired at first hand by observation and experiment, and for this form of study solitude was essential. Books in themselves form a line of defence against intrusion ; a man may bury himself in his books and be lost to the world around ; but one apparently unoccupied is the prey of interruption, and to meditate fruitfully one must be much alone and not even distracted by recent contact with other minds.

Would that a fuller record of these visits than de Sorbière's fleeting mention had survived ! How much we should like to know on what lines the talk ran, what part the Princess bore in it, who were the other members of the company, and whether the Philosopher showed himself more the deep thinker, the accurate

* *Descartes*, Mahaffy.

expounder, exacting close attention and logical acumen from his devotees, or whether on these occasions he did not appear more as the kindly host, the agreeable man of the world, drawing from the lighter store of his learning for the entertainment of his visitors. Well, we shall never know, and imagination here must be allowed some little play.

At least, we know that Elizabeth became his pupil and disciple, but whether in this informal way through casual and friendly intercourse, or whether he attended her in her home as a professor, giving her regular lessons in Philosophy, is not clear. He seems to have bestowed a good deal of precise instruction as to the course of study to be pursued, as her letters occasionally plead that the pressure of home engagements has prevented her fulfilling the prescribed task. Two studies he particularly recommended if she would be able thoroughly to grasp his principles—mathematics and physics—embracing botany, zoology, anthropology. Here her brother Rupert* came to her aid, for he shared her tastes on the more practical side. Not long after her first acquaintance with Descartes, Rupert was at home for a time, having returned from his long captivity in Vienna, to the great joy of his family. He got back in December, 1641, and remained until February, and to this period probably belong the joint studies and experiments to which de Sorbière refers, and he was at the Hague again for a while in the summer, having escorted his aunt and his young

* *L'Influence de Cartésianisme sur les Femmes du XVII^{me} Siècle*, Foucher de Careil.

cousin Mary when she came to marry the youthful William of Orange.

Though so much of Elizabeth's childhood had been spent with her elder brother Charles, her junior, Rupert, seems to have held the warmest place in her affection, and there is a more confidential tone in her letters to him. It is a great pity so few of these have survived. With all his undeniable virtues there was a coldness and selfishness about the young Elector Palatine, and of his behaviour she could not always approve; but Rupert's warm heart and steadfast nature appealed both to the more reserved though very affectionate temperament of Elizabeth and to her high ideals of conduct; he and she had much in common in other domains than those of the intellect. He threw himself with characteristic zest into his sister's eager studies: anything practical appealed to Rupert; with the more meditative and theoretic side of her researches he would not be so much in sympathy, but his mathematical talent made him fully competent to aid her in this science as well as in experiments. Had not the life of a soldier claimed him and absorbed his best years and strength, he might well have made his mark either as savant or as artist, and in his later years was devoted to study and to perfecting the invention of mezzotint engraving, of which the principle had been communicated to him by a German soldier in his recent campaign.

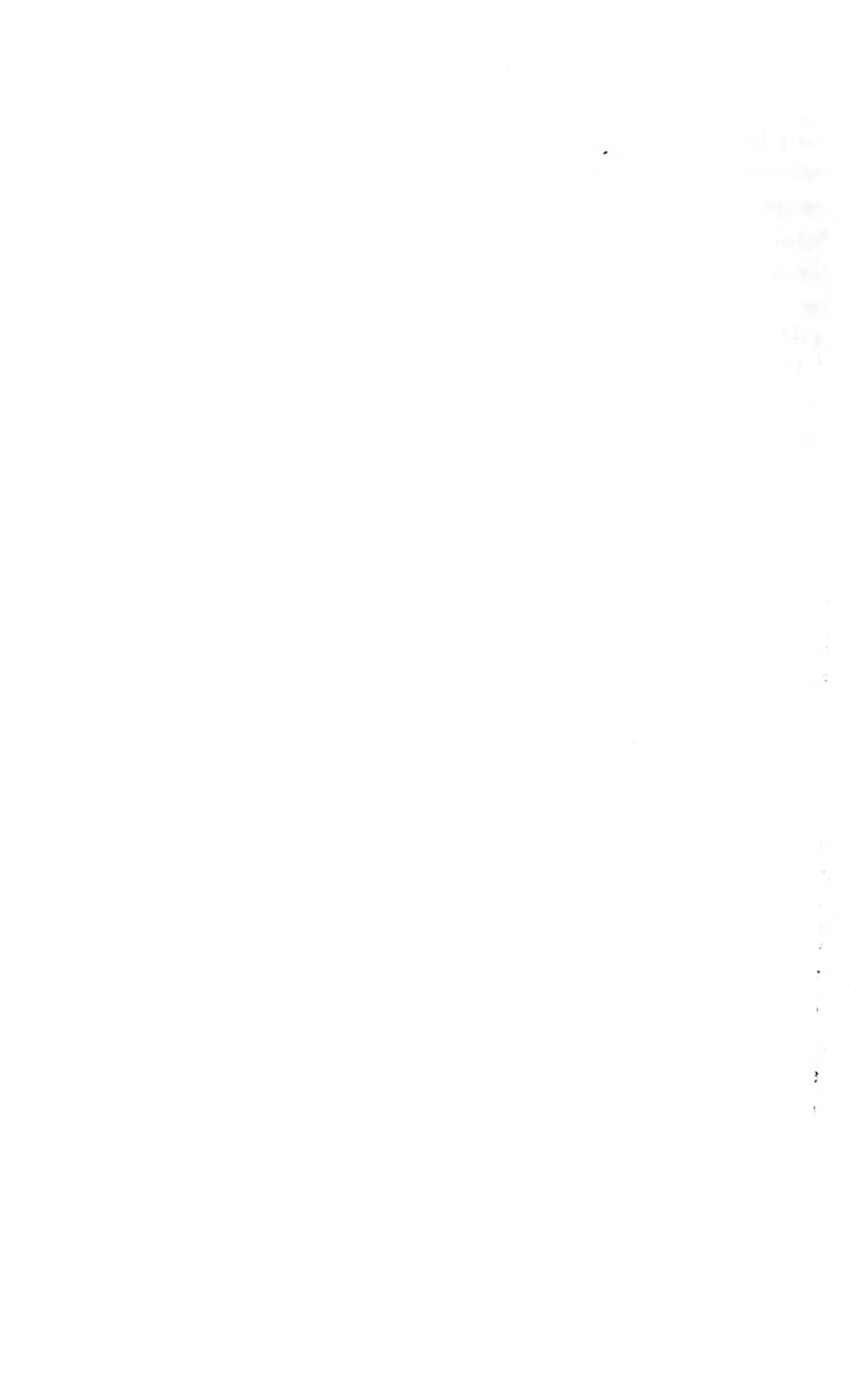
Elizabeth must have felt considerable enthusiasm to have been induced to attempt not merely chemical experiments, but even dissections; but she was be-



Photo.

Edmund von König, Heidelberg

PRINCE RUPERT
From a painting by Vandyck



fore all things thorough. Her learning, said de Sorbière, quoting from those who knew her better than he did, was something very different from the superficial following of the traditions of the schools; it was personal, vital, original, and in her earnest desire to understand she would put aside her feminine prejudices.

When the family move was made to Rhenen a correspondence was begun between the Princess and her learned friend that became one of the prime interests of her life, growing more confidential with the passing of the years and ceasing only on his death. M. Foucher de Careil speaks of "a tender and romantic relation springing up between master and pupil," but these are not love letters, but those of friendship pure and simple. It is true the Philosopher sometimes addresses to the Princess praises that sound fulsome in our modern ears, but are quite in the taste of the day in writing to women of rank, as when in a letter of many compliments he speaks of "a discourse more than human issuing from a body such as they ascribe to the angels." But he adopts the same tone in addressing the sisters when, Elizabeth being away from home, they undertook to forward his letters, and he compares their kind offices to "the mediation of angels." He never forgets the respect due to her position, and after the first letter or two slides into a far simpler and more natural mode of address. On her side she always signs herself: "*Vôtre très affectionnée amie à vous servir.*"

The answers of Elizabeth are the letters thought to

have been lost, of which copies bearing every mark of authenticity were recovered by the researches of M. Foucher de Careil. Many of the earlier were written from Rhenen, some from the Hague after Descartes had left Endegeest and gone to the more northern part of Holland ; the later ones were mostly from Berlin and Krossen. At the first they were chiefly concerned with the studies Descartes had recommended her to pursue and the discussion of philosophical questions ; frequently she propounds difficulties for solution, and in so doing not seldom lays her finger on the weak points in his argument ; some, indeed, she brings forward which the philosopher is hardly able to meet. If she saw difficulties she never blinked them, and her outspoken comments seem often to have helped her master to a more definite and lucid expression, and to the clearing up of what he had left vague. Her letters were always very simple and direct ; in her style there were no useless phrases nor unnecessary verbiage. She repudiated, as did Descartes, the scholastic method of wrapping up logical principles in a profusion of wordy expressions, and he said of her that she would make the subject on which she was writing emerge as a sculptor might make Minerva emerge from a shapeless block of marble. Using an analogy from another art he loved, he praised in her style the harmonious translation of thought into fitting phrase, like the progressions of music. Modest she always remained in spite of the compliments lavished on her from so high a quarter, and in her letters frequently apologises humbly to

him for her stupidity and slowness in understanding ; whereas he said of her that she went straight to the heart of a subject with the methodical precision of a philosopher. Her difficulties were not such as came from an incapacity to understand, but in her constant desire for exact comprehension she submitted to him every doubt as it arose in her mind in the course of her reading.

As the correspondence goes on a more intimate and personal tone comes in ; the Princess confides in him as friend as well as intellectual guide, seeks his sympathy in her troubles, his advice in ill-health or perplexity. In a life by no means free from vexations she evidently found much solace in his letters, and, solitary as she often was in the midst of a large family party, turned to him for the comprehension she could not always find at home.

CHAPTER VI

LITERARY LADIES

Cultivation of women in the seventeenth century—Learned women under the Renaissance—Literary guilds in Holland—Women members—Anna and Tesselschade Visscher—Links with the Hague—Anna Maria van Schurmann—Her treatise, *The Learned Maid*—Her letters to English correspondents—Comparison with Princess Elizabeth—Constantine Huyghens—His poems dedicated to the Princess Palatine—The Queen's album.

THOUGH this friendship with Descartes was the deepest and strongest, it was by no means the only influence that went to form the mind of Elizabeth ; she grew in an atmosphere of cultivation and one in which the talents of women found full development. Not only did she inherit intellectual traditions on both sides of her family, but at the Hague she would find herself in congenial surroundings. She was herself exceptionally gifted, but the education she and her sisters enjoyed was that bestowed on all young ladies of rank in her time, and if she carried her studies further after she had left the schoolroom she was not the only one who did so.

Holland was then at the zenith of its prosperity, and the literary society in its thriving towns as brilliant as could be found in any of the capitals of Europe ;

and the two brothers, Maurice and Frederic Henry, who were successively Stadthalters, were both generous patrons of art and learning, and themselves men of taste. The fashion which had sprung up in Germany in the early days of the Renaissance of forming literary guilds or circles, "krantzen" as they were called, for the encouragement of learning and setting a standard of taste had taken root in Holland, and flourished in every sufficiently populous centre. The aims of these were partly literary, partly social, and in them women played no inconsiderable part. In a very charming book, *Court Life in the Dutch Republic*, the Baroness de Nyevelt draws a most interesting picture of society in the Netherlands, especially in Amsterdam, at a period a little before the time that the Palatinate family took up their abode at the Hague, describing several of these guilds. The chief ornaments of the circle at Amsterdam were the two charming sisters, Anna and Tesselschade Visscher, daughters of Römer Visscher, a Catholic merchant, himself a man of considerable literary attainment. He had an especial hobby for bringing in the fashion of writing poetry in the mother-tongue instead of, as hitherto customary, in Latin; and for this reason, as was supposed, did not have his clever daughters instructed in the learned tongues, a course then thought very unusual, as they were highly educated in other ways. Indeed, their instruction was wonderfully complete in all modern branches; they were very carefully taught caligraphy—then quite a fine art—drawing, modelling, music, embroidery, lute-playing; also to ride, dance, and swim.

A very full and interesting account of these sisters, as well as of the "krantzen," which were such a feature of their time, is also to be found in Mr. Edmund Gosse's *Studies in Northern Literature*, well worth attention not only as individual portraits of two exceptional women, but as showing the literary environment in which their talents ripened. The younger sister seems to have been a woman of singular charm, and her delicate taste in poetry exercised a remarkable influence on the circle of clever men who surrounded her father. She and her sisters are thus described by a contemporary :—

Römer Visscher had three daughters, all of whom were practised in very sweet accomplishments : they could play music, paint, write, and engrave on glass, make poems, cut emblems, embroider all manner of fabrics, and swim well, which last thing they had learnt in their father's garden, where there was a canal with water outside the city.

The middle sister, Gertrude, was of more domestic tastes and less distinguished than the other two, though educated in the same way. She married a Protestant brewer, and withdrew to some extent from the life of the circle.

Their father had much to do with the establishment of one of the literary guilds in Amsterdam, and was its first president ; its aim was to encourage the study and writing of poetry, to debate various didactic or humanistic subjects, and to submit the work of members to the discussion and criticisms of their fellows. A special object was to preserve the language in its purity from becoming debased by the introduction of

French words and encourage its employment in works of a purely literary nature. The various circles adopted fanciful names and mottoes to distinguish them, such as the Marigold, the White Lavender Blossom, or the Fig Tree; the one to which the Visschers belonged was called the Eglantine, and its motto was "Blossoming in Love." The meetings at first were held in a house called Meerhuizen, by the Utrecht gate, belonging to Spieghel, another member. It had a garden with a summer-house perched in an old linden tree, celebrated by the name of "the Muses' Tower Court." When Spieghel left Amsterdam for Alkmaar the literary club was removed to Visscher's house on the Cingel. After his death his daughters continued to exercise the same influence over the literary circle which surrounded them, of which Tesselschade remained the idol and inspiration. Through her married life and widowhood she was still the life of the guild and still wrote charming verse. Her *Wild and Tame Songsters* has been compared, both for the music of its rhythm and for its turn of thought, to Shelley's *Ode to a Skylark*.

She belonged to a generation earlier than Elizabeth, being five-and-twenty years her senior, and we do not hear that they ever met; but a link between the circle at Amsterdam and society at the Hague was found in Constantine Huyghens, Sieur de Zuylichem and secretary to the Stadthalter Frederic Henry. He was a member of the literary coterie called the Muider Kring, himself a poet and an admirable classical scholar, and frequently met the sisters at the house

of the poet Hooft in Muiden, where they were often guests. They had been friends of old, and Tesselschade always brought her new poems to Hooft for his criticism before she published them. He was a wealthy man, son of a merchant prince of Amsterdam ; he had no taste for commerce and had spent many years abroad. On his return from Italy he had proposed to Anna Visscher, but though she refused him there was no break in his friendship for her and her sister. In his youth Constantine Huyghens was numbered amongst Tesselschade's admirers, but he chose for his wife one of her friends, Susanna van Baerle, a member of the same literary guild, and a writer of very charming verse. When settled at the Hague he was a frequent guest at the Queen of Bohemia's receptions, and his children, one of whom became a very distinguished man, the discoverer of one of Saturn's rings, were probably playmates and friends of the little princes and princesses. They lived in a house at the corner of the Plein.

The most celebrated name amongst the literary ladies of Holland is that of Anna Maria van Schurmann, who came in time midway between the Visscher sisters and Elizabeth ; she was the friend of the latter's girlhood, and after a break the friendship was resumed in old age. If she did not rival the Princess in the powers of her mind, she excelled her in the number and variety of her attainments. She was several years older, being a young woman of about four-and-twenty, delivering lectures in the University while Elizabeth was still a schoolgirl. As a child she



Photo.

ANNA MARIA VAN SCHURMANN

Louis Fricke, Herford

From a print in the Herford Museum. By permission of Herr Rector Normann

must have been precocious even for those days of extraordinary infant maturity, for it is recorded of her that she adopted definite Calvinistic principles when she was between three and four years of age ! This is related in all seriousness, though what the religious convictions of even an Anna van Schurmann could be worth at that age it would be hard to say. She was born at Cologne of German parentage, though brought at a very early age to Utrecht, where she received a wonderfully complete education, and was permitted while quite a child to attend the lectures at the University. Not only did she study the classical tongues as well as logic and theology, but she made herself mistress of Hebrew and Arabic. Besides these severer studies she was accomplished in flower painting, portrait painting, wood-carving, engraving, and tapestry. In the Epistle Dedicatory which Friedrich von Spanheim prefixed to her treatise, *The Learned Maid*, he writes in eulogistic vein : " If she hath a vast understanding piercing into all things, she hath also a skilful hand marvellously obedient to that guide, executing and expressing in all materials whatever that commands."

This quaint little tract is now but little known except to those who dabble in literary curiosities, although a translation was published by John Redmayne in London, 1659, shortly after its appearance. The English edition, besides Spanheim's dedication, is ushered in by yet another Epistle Dedicatory—" To the Lady A. N., by the translator, C. B.," in which the piety and modesty of the author are enlarged upon.

The small pamphlet seems almost overweighted by its accompaniments, to say nothing of the elaborate title-page, which bears the inscription : *The Learned Maid, or Whether a Maid may be a Scholar ? A Logical Exercise written in Latin by that Incomparable Virgin Anna Maria à Schurmann of Utrecht.* The motto is for the subject somewhat strangely chosen ; it consists of a sentence in Greek, taken from Ignatius : " My Love is Crucified." But Anna approached her theme from a religious point of view ; behind all her zeal for learning, all her stiffness and pedantry, lay a deep sense of religion, a strongly mystical bent which came out in later years when she cast aside all worldly attainments, burnt her poems, and gave her conscience into the keeping of Jean de Labadie.

It is worth study, both as a specimen of the formal logical disputation of that day and also for the parallel it suggests with our own times. Not so very long ago the battle now raging round the suffragettes was waged on behalf of those who claimed that university education should be open to women. The demand was then considered startlingly new, but the very same question was being debated in the seventeenth century, if not earlier, and the very same objections were marshalled and answered by the very same well-worn arguments. Then, as later, several learned men espoused the cause of the ladies. One of their champions, Jacob Thomasius, the distinguished Head of the University of Leipsic, not only encouraged women to study there, but permitted them to hold disputations under his presidency, a course already adopted

in Holland, where, as we have seen, the learned Anna disputed in the halls both of Utrecht and Leyden, though concealed from view in a curtained pew. A little later, about the year 1671, a treatise was put forth by Sauerbrei, entitled *De Fæminarum Eruditione*, in which the claims of women were supported by a long list of distinguished names, including that of Olympia Morata, who had been the pride of the University of Heidelberg and the friend and correspondent of Melancthon, and this Roll of Honour was completed by the Princess Palatine and Anna Maria van Schurmann.

But Anna did not require a man to fight for her ; she took up the cudgels herself on behalf of her sex, and brought out her pamphlet in which the whole question was formally set forth and debated according to the strict rules of logic. To judge from the form, it was probably first produced as a thesis or disputation, and afterwards published as a tract. The thesis is set forth, and then the arguments marshalled according to the rules of the game in the following manner :—

Whether a Maid may be a Scholar ? We hold the affirmative, and will endeavour to make it good.

Præcognita on subject and predicate :

Maid or Woman, her that is a Christian.

Scholar : one given to the study of Letters Superior, entitled Faculties, Tongues ; Inferior, Philosophy.

Whether she may be—convenient, viz. expedient, fit, decent.

The question having been thus opened in order,

the disputant proceeds to limit the subject, by defining the kind of woman to whom it applies, and the predicate, the kind of learning she is to receive, before going on to her arguments. The repetition of formulæ becomes tiresome and would weary the modern reader, though relieved by occasional oddities such as the plea that all who have "a sublime countenance" are suited to study. Maids as often have a sublime countenance as men: ergo maids may study. But most of Anna's arguments are based on plain good sense. Study, she observes, is desirable for those who need solid and continuous employment; women of the leisured class most experience this need, and they are most free from public cares, therefore for them it is most desirable. On this head she quotes a sentence from a letter of Erasmus, describing the education of the young daughters of his friend Sir Thomas More: "Nothing takes so full possession of the fair temple of a virgin's breast as learning and study." Against the argument that women's wits are weaker than those of men she urges that the exercise of the powers of the mind strengthens the nerves, therefore those whose nerves are weakest need it most; and if it is pleaded that women lack a taste for study, she answers that taste cannot be discovered or developed without trial. Further, she suggests that study may be pursued at home, and therefore will prevent gadding; as "a wise and learned man is sufficient for himself," so would be a wise and learned maid.

Her students must, however, be those who are sufficiently free from household cares, either celibate

or provided with handmaidens, as, unlike some of her successors, she puts piety and home duties in the forefront of her scheme. She also sets limits to the studies to be pursued. To the axiom, "All honest discipline or the whole circle and crown of liberal arts are convenient for the head of our Christian maid," she appends degrees of importance. First come theology and the moral virtues, next grammar, logic, and rhetoric, for logic is the key of sciences; then physics, metaphysics, history; lastly languages, especially Hebrew and Greek. Mathematics (under which head she counts music) may, with poetry and painting, "obtain the place of pretty ornaments and ingenious recreations." Those studies which pertain to the practice of the law, military discipline, and oratory in Church, Court, or University (despite her own feats in this line), she judges less proper for a woman, though she should not be excluded from scholastic knowledge or politics.

She sums up that it becomes a perfect man to know all that is to be known. Whatever perfects and adorns man is good for woman; and as all creatures tend to their last and highest perfection, the adornment of learning is good for woman.

To the English edition of this little book a few letters are appended which are of interest as showing the writer's position in the learned world and the estimation in which she was held. One is to Gassendi, the opponent of the philosophy of Descartes, deprecating the exaggerated praise which he had addressed to her. Another is to Johannes Beverovicus, begging

him not to dedicate his treatise on the claims of women to her, as he had proposed to do, lest the jealousy of men be provoked. Several are to English people ; her works seem to have been much studied and liked in England, especially among the Puritans. One in quite an affectionate vein is to Lady Moor, expressing an earnest wish that they might be together :—

That we may be able in so great a conspiracy of studies and affections to excite each other unto virtue. . . . Here sweetly passing away our time with the Muses, we erect our minds to higher matters, and without impediment run the course of philosophy. . . . I have added my effigies, done to the life with my own hand, that every way, so far as I can I may make myself known unto you.

This looks as if the acquaintance were one by letter only. If the “effigies” mentioned is the portrait prefixed to the treatise it must be owned the artist made no attempt to flatter herself.

It is interesting to find one letter addressed to Sir Simond d'Ewes, a Puritan M.P., who left a curious little autobiographical sketch. In this letter there is an allusion to Mrs. Bathsua Makyns, the same who kept a ladies' school at Putney and was sometime governess to the little Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Charles I. Mrs. Makyns was a woman of some distinction, and her notice evidently considered an honour, for Mademoiselle Schurmann writes :—

As to what you write concerning the most learned matron Madam Bathsua Makyns, that she so highly commendeth

my industry in the sublime studies, and that you were upon that account inflamed with an incredible desire of having conference with me : all this I impute to her undeserved affection for me. I am very much delighted with the best and noblest things, though sometimes they exceed my capacity.

The writer testifies a deep interest in the political situation in England, then (November, 1645) becoming acute, begging that her correspondent will keep her informed of "whatever may be achieved by your honourable Assemblie either in peace or war." Though she seems to have had a personal acquaintance with Mrs. Bathsua Makyns, it does not appear whether she had ever visited England. She had evidently much sympathy with the Puritan party, and this, as well as her great dislike to Descartes, may have been a cause of her temporary alienation from her friend the Princess Elizabeth, who naturally felt deeply for the troubles of her uncle, in which her favourite brother took so active a part. The little book ends with a letter to Doctor Rivet, containing an enthusiastic appreciation of Lady Jane Grey :—

Nothing in her life was so pleasant to her as the knowledge of the three learned tongues. Oh, sweet words ! pronounced not under the shade of the schools, but at the last act of a most glorious martyrdom. Who would not reverence this saying and take it for an oracle ?

The very extraordinary attainments of this young lady called forth very extraordinary compliments from the learned men with whom she came in contact at

the various universities at which she lectured, or who entered into correspondence with her about her poems or her disputations. Not content with apostrophising her in Latin verse as the fourth Grace or the tenth Muse, they addressed her as "Virago," evidently intending a high compliment, the expression not having acquired the significance which it now has. A prettier name bestowed upon her was "The Torch of Learning," and some called her "The Dutch Minerva." Possibly this adulation a little turned her head. Though a deeply religious woman and essentially modest, she had neither the simplicity of character nor the respect for the opinions of others that kept Elizabeth so humble; Anna at least laid herself open to the reproach of pedantry. Descartes, who had no love for her, referred to her in a letter to his friend Mersenne as "the greatest pedant in the world."

Nor was she gifted with the personal charm which enabled Tesselschade Visscher to wield so lasting an influence over the men of her day. Anna was a very plain woman, and did not recommend herself by any suavity of manner or address; in fact, she seems to have been somewhat overbearing. "She smells of the Schools," was Pieter Hooft's dictum; "she cannot hold a rose to our Tesselschade." Certainly such specimens of her poems as have survived stand no comparison with the music and sweetness of thought and expression which adorned those of her rival; they are rather learned exercises.

Descartes might be a somewhat prejudiced witness, for she was the pupil—nay, more, the disciple—of his

arch-enemy Voëtius, and learned from her master to consider the Philosopher quite an atheist. They had a passage-of-arms on one occasion when, calling on her, he found her engaged on the study of Hebrew, and instead of expressing surprised admiration, as she doubtless expected, rather teasingly inquired why she wasted her time on such trivialities. She replied that she wished to be able to study Genesis in the original, and was deeply scandalised at his asserting that he did not consider it worth the trouble, for he found Moses could throw no clear light on the origin of the universe. Very likely the Sage was not above saying this expressly to shock her, and he certainly succeeded, for she seriously tried to detach Elizabeth from his doctrines. One of her earliest letters to the Princess consists almost entirely of a eulogium of the Scholastic Philosophy, not without a side-hit at some who would not, like the scholastics, suffer themselves to be guided by “the two great stars of science, divine and human, St. Augustine and Aristotle, whose light can never be obscured, whatever fogs and chaos of error certain thinkers might attempt to oppose to their brilliant light.” * Though Descartes is not named, it is easy to see who was in her mind, and the letter was probably in reply to something Elizabeth had written in his praise. Unlike most of those who surrounded her, Descartes thought but lightly of her learning, and said of her :—

Voëtius has spoilt Mademoiselle de Schurmann. She

* *L'Influence de Cartésianisme sur les Femmes du XVII^{me} Siècle*, Foucher de Careil.

had the most excellent genius for poetry, painting, and the arts generally ; and now since five or six years he is in such complete possession of her mind that it is taken up only with theological controversies ! This quite deprives her of the conversation and society of the worthy folk of everyday life.

Considering the way in which they regarded each other, it is hardly likely that she made one in those pleasant little parties to Endegeest. He expressed a wish notwithstanding to be present at one of her disputations at Utrecht, if he might be permitted to conceal himself behind the curtains of her pew. This pew or tribune, in which the lady might be heard without being seen, has now disappeared ; it was probably situated in the gallery which commands the dais at the upper end of the aula.

Various universities, notably Leyden, invited her to deliver lectures, and it may very probably have been on one of these occasions that she made the acquaintance of the Princess Elizabeth, then a girl of fourteen. Anna Maria must have been at least four or five-and-twenty, and it is easy to imagine the enthusiasm which the studious Princess would conceive for so eminent a scholar of her own sex. It is tantalising that of the letters exchanged between them only a few of Anna's have survived, and these are occupied entirely with serious subjects. Here are no girlish outpourings of enthusiasms, still less any confidences about lovers or amusements, but grave warnings on Anna's part lest her young friend should be dazzled and led away from the old safe paths. It was probably this differ-

ence of opinion about the intercourse with Descartes which was growing to be so much to Elizabeth that estranged the two friends and caused the correspondence to drop, only to be resumed many years later, when Descartes was no more than a memory.

Writing many years later, when seeking Elizabeth's protection at Herford, Anna thus refers to their youthful friendship :—

She honoured me with a special kindness. Forty years, I think, must have passed since, despising the frivolities and vanities of other princesses, she raised her mind to the noble study of the most lofty science ; she felt herself drawn to me by this community of tastes and interests, and testified her favour as well by visits as by her gracious letters. Since then my frequent changes of residence, the obstacles I encountered in the mode of life which I had chosen, my retirement from the world and things of the earth, my association with other pious persons had been reported to her for good or for evil. But the remembrance of my past life woke in her the old friendship, and she could not believe me capable of things disturbing to the public tranquillity, and without allowing herself to be stopped by calumny, wrote, offering me an asylum.

The two shared a European reputation. When Marie de Gonzaga, Queen of Poland, was passing through Holland in 1645 she stayed at the Hague with the object of seeing Elizabeth, for, wrote her secretary, de Laboureur, “ the whole North resounds with her fame.” Not improbably also she may have had a curiosity to see the woman who from religious motives had declined the position she herself occupied.

She was not received, however ; most likely because of the unwelcome alliance Edward was just on the point of forming with her sister Anne, and, foiled in this, she travelled to Utrecht to see the other star of whom she had heard so much, and went away " full of astonishment and quite dazzled by so much talent."

If Cartesianism failed to attract Mademoiselle de Schurmann, with her strong Calvinistic bias, it made an appeal to most of the thoughtful and well-read women of the day, and they were amongst the most ardent disciples of the new doctrine, as has been pointed out by M. Foucher de Careil in his treatise on the influence of Cartesianism on the women of the seventeenth century. He says :—

Repoussée par l'école, sa philosophie fut bien accueillie par les salons. Les femmes qui y exerçaient alors un empire souverain furent des premières à l'adopter, et Malebranche, qui n'est qu'un Descartes plus chrétien et plus tendre, avait coutume de dire que les femmes plus dégagées de préjugés que les savans, comprenaient mieux ses leçons.

If philosophy were the preoccupation of such thoughtful souls, literature of a lighter kind flourished and was appreciated in the society around them. Books, music, pictures abounded in Elizabeth's home and in that of her great-uncle, the Stadthalter. Good plays were by no means rare ; the English companies of strolling actors frequently gave performances of the plays of Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Ben Jonson. Though the Princess walked in more solitary paths, on loftier heights than some of those who surrounded



Photo.

F. Bruckmann, Munich

CONSTANTINE HUYGHENS WITH HIS CHILDREN

From a painting by Adrian Hanneman in the Mauritshuis, the Hague. By permission

her, she enjoyed in her home an atmosphere of cultivation as well as of wit. She had a book of a lighter type dedicated to her than the deep philosophical work of M. Descartes, for the Sieur de Zuylichem placed her name in the forefront of his new volume of verse, an honour for which she thanks him in a very graceful little note :—

Should another have shown the book which you have sent, I could not but have admired the excellence of your poetry ; but you have given me another subject of admiration in the excess of your politeness : the former merits praises, the latter thanks ; and the great number of estimable and remarkable qualities which you possess, although you slight your muse, renders panegyric an impertinence : although it is composed by one who can do it with no other ornament than truth.

A curious little album preserved in the British Museum, once belonging to the Queen of Bohemia, seemed to promise some interesting autographs ; but, alas ! by the time that Princess Elizabeth had joined her mother's *salon* and was attracting the homage of such men as Descartes and Huyghens, it had been presented to the favourite son, and by him carried off to England, so neither Elizabeth's signature nor those of her especial friends are to be found in it. It has all the intimate charm of amateurishness, containing mottoes, little borderings of conventional design, some quite badly done, coats-of-arms, and one or two quaint little oval landscapes ; the very smudge of red paint against one of the signatures seems to bring it near. One entry, that of Christian of Brunswick, holds a

fragrant memory like a dead rose : “ Tout pour Dieu et ma très chère Reine. Christian.” The faded red velvet cover is adorned with a crown and a Tudor rose very crookedly stamped. Rightly it holds no place in this chapter, but to handle it seems to bring across the centuries something of the atmosphere surrounding the Queen and her daughters.

With such men as Huyghens and his clever son, the brothers Dhona, the courtly de Pollot, the Queen's friend, Lord Craven, and perhaps occasional visits from the philosophical young Englishman, Charles Cavendish, to say nothing of the brothers coming and going, there can have been no lack of brilliant conversation, and in such a sunny atmosphere Elizabeth's talents could not but ripen, though guidance in deeper matters she sought from the sage at Endegeest.

CHAPTER VII

THE TEACHINGS OF DESCARTES

Position of the learned world in his day—Novelty of his doctrine—Its appeal to Elizabeth—His fundamental principle—His own account of its inception—Objections of adversaries—Princess Elizabeth's questions—His dedication of the *Principia*—Summary of his doctrine—Heinz's estimate of it—Attitude of Descartes to religion—Elizabeth's advice to her master—Her help in translating from English.

TO estimate fairly the influence of Cartesianism on its age it is needful that we place ourselves by an effort of imagination in the mental environment of the contemporaries of Descartes, so as to realise in some measure what it meant to them. Looking back at it from our own standpoint, now that what was then daring has become to us commonplace, and what was in his day a fruitful and suggestive hypothesis is left behind as an antiquated superstition, we may perhaps fail to perceive its value and importance as a stage in philosophic thought. In the second quarter of the seventeenth century the thinking world was beginning to shake itself free from the scholastic tradition, and venturing to regard the universe with unprejudiced eyes. The forces of the Renaissance were not spent, but from stimulating an interest in ancient

literature were passing on to arousing a zest for new and practical knowledge: those of the Reformation were still fresh, and were giving a more and more individualistic bent to the workings of men's minds. The theories of Galileo and the methods of Bacon were but new; while the discoveries of Newton had not yet dawned on the horizon. The last century had seen the opening up of a whole new continent beyond the sea, and people were just realising that the world was round. The cultivated world was keenly interested, not only in exploring new heavens and a new earth, but no less in the changing aspects of philosophy, now in the light of new knowledge opening up questions hitherto undreamed of, and was ready to welcome with ardour any theory which offered fresh solutions of the age-long problems of existence.

For any comprehensive survey of the method of Descartes readers who are not students of philosophy may be referred to the article on Cartesianism in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, or to Professor Mahaffy's compendious little handbook on Descartes; all that is here attempted is such a summary view of the system as may help us to some idea of its influence on Elizabeth. As already noted, it had a great vogue among the clever women of the day, but she was not one to be swayed by fashion to adopt a philosophy, as did the *Précieuses*, as though it were a new style of lapdog, a becoming toy; to her, at least, it made a genuine appeal. There was something in Cartesianism that answered to her need and enabled her to view the

universe with new eyes. The systems of philosophy she had hitherto studied had been grounded on certain assumptions, on traditional rules derived from the thinkers of antiquity, more especially Aristotle. The keystone of the method of Descartes was the going back to first principles and building anew on inward perception. He would brush aside the antiquated assumptions of the schoolmen, would endeavour to go behind even the testimony of the senses and get to the most elementary ground of knowledge; he would retrace the unconscious process by which we become aware of the world of sense, would unweave the web of experience and begin afresh with the one absolute inward certainty, the consciousness of self. We think; therefore we know we are: *Cogito, ergo sum*. From this base, by logical sequence, Descartes would deduce the rest and gradually unfold the scheme of the universe.

From the consciousness of self he infers the existence of a God infinite and perfect: the being who thinks is aware of limitations; to be aware of limitations is to transcend them. A finite being could not conceive the infinite if there be no infinite; an imperfect being could not conceive perfection unless there be in him the reflection of a perfection existing somewhere: the infinite cannot be derived from the finite, but the finite presupposes the infinite. Hence he derives a clear certainty of God. From these perceptions, which he calls innate ideas, he proceeds to build up step by step his conception of the whole scheme of things. Both mind and matter, he asserts, exist in God: He

is mind, but is the Creator of matter. One science, Descartes found, gave results with absolute certainty, the science of mathematics, and he endeavoured to apply its laws rigidly to the working out of his system.

Descartes' own account of his discovery of his great root principle is given in brief by Professor Mahaffy. From this I will take the liberty to quote :—

After I had spent some years in studying the book of the world (in contrast to the books of the learned), and in thus striving to gain some experience, I determined one day to study within myself, and to employ all my mental force in choosing the paths which I ought to follow—in which I succeeded, I think, far better than if I had never left my country or my books. I was then in Germany on account of the wars, and as I was returning from the coronation of the Emperor to the army, the commencement of winter stopped me in a quarter where, finding no conversation to entertain me, and fortunately having neither cares nor passions to trouble me, I remained all day alone shut up in a warm room, where I was at perfect leisure to occupy myself with my own thoughts.

He resolved to work on wholly independent lines, to free himself from the prejudices gained from books, and to seek in the depths of his own mind for the sure foundations on which he must build. Perceiving the absolute certainty of mathematical demonstrations, he concluded that, were the premises equally secure, it would be possible by following strict logical sequence to attain equal certainty in all domains of the intellect. This scheme required long preparation before he could perfect it by rooting out false opinions imbibed in

previous study, and by collecting data by observation and experiment, but he was satisfied he was on the right road, and hoped to be able to apply it to all branches of knowledge. The epitaph written for his tomb by his friend Chanut thus sums up what he aimed at accomplishing: "Comparing the mysteries of nature with the laws of mathematics, he dared to hope that the secrets of both could be unlocked with the same key."

This wonderful discovery, this *inventum mirabile*, as he enthusiastically styled it, wrought him into a state of exaltation in which he saw dreams and visions like a mystic entranced rather than a sober philosopher, and in this excited frame he vowed a pilgrimage to Loretto—"on foot from Venice, if it be convenient and the usual custom, if not at least as devoutly as is any one's wont." This vow he duly carried out, but not until four years later. The saving clause was eminently characteristic of the man; capable of an untiring devotion to an ideal aim, he was always held in check by a foundation of cool common sense.

When after a time he published his *Discourse on Method*, the novelty of his ideas attracted a good deal of attention. Some saw in the stress he laid on experimental physiology and the importance he ascribed to his laboratory a likeness to the great English philosopher, Francis Bacon, but he was no disciple of Bacon; his method was essentially different, deductive rather than experimental, his experiments were for verification, in his scheme the working out of logical mathematical law counted for far more. He was very willing

to submit his work to the fullest criticism, and rather courted objections, sending preliminary copies to his friend the Abbé Mersenne, in Paris, in order that he might show them to the most learned men, and gather counter-arguments, which might be published with the book, together with his refutations. The comments thus provoked did not show any very sound grasp of his position. Gassendi, in reference to his first principle, *Cogito, ergo sum*, remarked that it would be as valid to say *Ambulo, ergo sum*, to which Descartes made answer that thinking is a continuous act or state, and therefore a proof of a totally different nature to the exercise of an occasional faculty. The objections brought forward by Arnauld were more weighty, but to those of the English thinker, Hobbes, he was not inclined to pay much attention, since they were couched in a somewhat sarcastic vein. It was reserved for the Princess Elizabeth to advance difficulties which were considered by the Philosopher worthy of his serious attention, and it was with astonishment that he recognised that she had laid her finger on the weak spot in his system.

The root principle appealed to her, based as it was on inward perception, but in the working out she encountered difficulties on which, without the least intending criticism, she simply asked to be satisfied. In one of her earliest letters she brings forward one of these, which shows how thorough had been her study. She had read both the *Meditations* and *Discourse on Method*, and in neither did she find the connection between soul and body, between the im-

material and the material, perfectly clear. A letter which she wrote from Rhenen, having just missed a visit from her friend, propounds her difficulty.

MONSIEUR DESCARTES, — I have learned with much pleasure and regret the intention you had of seeing me a few days ago, and was equally touched by your kindness in wishing to converse with one so ignorant and indocile, and by my misfortune in losing so profitable a conversation. The latter feeling was much increased by M. Palotti repeating to me the solutions you had given him of some of the obscurities in the *Physics* of M. Rhegius, about which I should have been better instructed by your own mouth, as also on a difficulty which I proposed to the said professor when he was in this town, who referred me to you to obtain the satisfaction I needed.

Shame at displaying to you a style so imperfect has hindered me till now from asking this favour by letter. But to-day M. Palotti gave me such assurance of your kindness to every one and especially to me that I have driven from my mind all other considerations than that of begging you to tell me how the soul of man can determine the motions of the body to perform voluntary actions (being but a thinking substance). For it seems that all determination of movement comes from the force exercised on the thing moved by that which moves it, or by the qualification and figure of the superficies of this latter. Touching is essential to the two first conditions and extension to the third. You exclude entirely from the former the notion which you have of the soul, and the latter appears to me incompatible with a thing immaterial. Therefore I ask for a more particular definition of soul than is contained in your metaphysics, that is to say, of substance separate from its action, thought. For whilst we suppose them inseparable (which would be difficult to

prove in the womb of the mother or in swoons) like the attributes of God, we might by considering them apart gain a clearer idea. Recognising you as the best physician for mine, I lay bare to you all its weaknesses and speculations, trusting that, according to the oath of Harpocrates, you will prescribe remedies without publishing them, which I beg you to do, and to permit the importunities of

Your very affectionate friend to serve you,

This 6 of May (1643).*

ELIZABETH.

The definition of matter as that which has extension, i.e. which occupies space, seemed to Elizabeth to exclude the soul as acting on matter. The difficulty showed her to have a fundamental grip of the subject, and was more just and deep than the many frivolous objections and quibbles brought forward by savants or divines. She had in truth laid her finger on the weak spot in Descartes' chain of reasoning, and he evidently felt that it was so, for he tried to evade the issue, even while complimenting her on her clear sight and promising to satisfy her. This, however, he failed to do, for the solution he offered was in truth no solution, and Elizabeth was still unsatisfied, though inclined to attribute it to her own failure to understand. She wrote again :—

Your kindness is shown, not only in pointing out and correcting the faults of my reasoning, as I had expected, but also to render their recognition less vexatious you try to console me—to the prejudice of your judgment—by undeserved praises, which might have been necessary to encourage me to work at remedying them, if my being

* *Descartes, La Princesse Elizabeth et la Reine Christine*, par A. Foucher de Careil.

brought up in a place where the ordinary style of conversation had not accustomed me to hearing of them from people incapable of estimating them truly, and made me presume myself safe in believing the contrary of what they said, and by rendering the consideration of my own imperfections so familiar that it gives me no further emotion than the desire of improving myself. This makes me confess without shame having found in myself all the causes of error which you have remarked in your letter, and not being able to banish them entirely, since the life which I am obliged to lead leaves me neither disposition nor time to acquire the habit of meditation according to your rule. Sometimes the interests of my family which I ought not to neglect, sometimes conversations and complaisances which I cannot avoid, lower this weak mind of mine with vexation or weariness, so that for long it is useless for anything else, which will serve, I hope, to excuse my stupidity in not being able to understand the idea by which we judge how the soul (without extent and immaterial) can move the body. . . .

She enlarges on the topic in a manner which shows that Descartes had not met the real difficulty, and adds :—

I own it would be easier to me to concede matter and extension to the soul than the capacity of moving a body and being moved by it to an immaterial being. . . . But as you have undertaken to instruct me I assure myself that you will explain to me the nature of immaterial substance and the manner of its action and passions in the body, as well as all the other things which you would teach me. I beg you to believe that you could not do this kindness to any one who would be more sensible of the obligation than

Your very affectionate friend,

This 10 of June.

ELIZABETH.

The rather involved sentence near the beginning of the letter contains an evident reference, not without a touch of bitterness, to the candid criticisms of her own family.

The letters of this summer were chiefly occupied with the discussion of this subject, and perhaps it was Elizabeth's absorption in it that led Descartes to warn her of the dangers of an excessive study of metaphysic. He declared, with a touch surely of exaggeration, that he never devoted more than a few hours a year to those meditations which occupied the faculty of pure reason. To quote his own words :—

Je puis dire avec vérité que la principale règle que j'ai toujours observée en mes études, et celle que je crois m'avoir le plus servi pour acquérir quelque connaissances, a été, que je n'ai jamais employé que fort peu d'heures par jour au pensées qui occupent l'imagination, et fort peu d'heures par an à celles qui occupent l'entendement seul, et que j'ai donné tout le reste de mon temps au relâchement des sens et au repos de l'esprit. C'est ce qui m'a fait retirer aux champs, encore que dans la ville la plus occupée du monde je pourrois avoir autant d'heures à moi que j'en emploie maintenant à l'étude.

He was especially emphatic on the risks of too much of this kind of study for women who are by nature prone to lean too much on their faculty of intuition, and to indulge in mystical speculation, and enjoined on Elizabeth, as an antidote, a careful and precise study of geometry and algebra, setting her problems, her solution of which filled him with astonished admiration.

Elizabeth's doubts and questions certainly had

value in inducing the Philosopher to define and develop his doctrine, and in some cases to make clear what he had left vague and obscure, and, far from resenting them, he proved his appreciation of the justice and clearness of the objections she propounded in a very substantial manner by dedicating to her the great work to which his earlier writings had led up, the *Principia Philosophiæ*, published by Elzevir at Amsterdam in the year 1644. The dedication was embodied in a highly eulogistic epistle prefixed to the work, in which he professes that the greatest advantage he had derived from his previous writings was their having given him occasion for becoming acquainted with the Princess, whom he holds up as a model of learning and modesty. The epistle is too lengthy and wordy to quote entire, and much of it is couched in a strain of high-flown compliment in vogue at that day, but after circling round in a long preamble the pith of the praise comes in very genuine expression :—

I have never met any one who could so thoroughly understand all that is contained in my writings. For there are many, even amongst the best and most highly instructed minds, who find them obscure, and I observe that almost all those who understand readily those things that pertain to mathematics are not capable of comprehending those that belong to metaphysics, and I can say with truth that I have met none except your Highness to whom both are equally easy, which justifies me in regarding your Highness as incomparable.

There is a ring of sincerity in this passage, and certainly Elizabeth well deserved the encomium he

bestowed in the concluding passage upon her magnanimity and gentleness, and upon her constancy under repeated strokes of fate. She was never, he averred, irritable, never ill-humoured, depressed sometimes, but always patient.

She must have been greatly gratified at this high praise from one whose good opinion she valued so much; one, too, whose fame would carry it among the learned throughout the civilised world, but her modesty made her deprecate it with a touch of irony: "The pedants will say," she wrote, "that you will be forced to construct a new morality to make me worthy of it." That she was worthy was proved in that it woke in her no vanity; she never assumed the airs of a *précieuse*.

In this work Descartes gathers up the gist of all his previous writings, and it is the one by which he is best known. In the first part he re-states the doctrines of extension as the property of matter and thinking as the property of soul, of innate ideas as the basis of knowledge, and of the universal application of the laws of mathematics as already expounded in his *Meditations* and *Discourse of Method*, adding only some elucidations, very probably those which Elizabeth's strictures had shown to be desirable. The second part contains the substance of a work he had had long in hand on the material universe, a work which did not appear complete till many years after his death, when it was published as a treatise *On the World*. This had been set aside on account of the uneasiness caused him by the condemnation of Galileo,

but the principles of it he embodied with caution in this new work. He here enters on the nature of matter, on the reality of extension and the impossibility of a vacuum, and introduces his theory of physics, reducing all the phenomena of nature to variations in size, figure, and motion in the minute particles of a perfectly homogeneous substance. He gives special laws of motion, as he holds it to be always the same in quantity throughout the universe, having been originated at the beginning by the Creator, and, like matter, imperishable. The third part enters on the theory of the solar system, the nature and origin of the fixed stars, and, assuming three elements of various density in degree (by reason of the varying minuteness and roundness of their parts), explains the whole universe by the theory of vortices or circular movement. (Tourbillon is the expression he makes use of.) This theory of his, now superseded by a more exact knowledge, was in his time a bold hypothesis, not without considerable value and significance. Part IV treats of the earth and its formation. This portion was left of necessity unfinished; for its completion it would require an exhaustive study of physiology, and an entire knowledge of the nature of plants, of animals, and of man. A treatise on Man was included, but that on plants is wanting and also that on medicine, which the author promised later, having made considerable study of the theory, though never practising it. The principles of Ethics he reserved for fuller treatment in a later book, which he afterwards pro-

duced as a treatise on the Passions, but he pointed out that the rational conception of Ethics grows naturally out of a clear perception of the unity of the world with the soul of man.

This little summary of the work—very needful if we are to understand its influence on the mind of Elizabeth—is gathered from Professor Mahaffy's useful little handbook. Dr. Max Heinz also, in his article on the Princess Palatine in the *Heidelberger Jahrbücher*, gives an illuminating view of its scope. He says :—

In this book Descartes, the father of modern Idealism, far outreaching the experimental philosophy of Francis Bacon, excluding all supernatural causes, aims at deducing by severe method exact knowledge on the ground of exact observation of organic as well as inorganic nature from a few principles. . . . a work now but little known or read, but much ridiculed on account of some extravagant hypotheses. The theory of tourbillons, popularised by Fontenelle, was accepted for a time, so also was the hypothesis of the meeting point between soul and body. The superseding of these things by more exact science should not blind readers to the worth of the Natural Philosophy it contains.

The Principia, we perceive, contains the sum and gist of the doctrine of Descartes in its most adequate form. The main characteristic of his philosophy, as it is lucidly summed up in the article on Cartesianism in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, lies in this, that it asserts and exhibits the unity of the intelligible world with the mind of man. From the starting-point of

the self-evident existence of the Ego it derives innate ideas of God and of the immateriality of the soul; through the doctrine of the extension of matter it arrives at the phenomena of the material universe, and with hardly a break in the chain of reasoning attains to the foundation of ethics. What gave it its remarkable vogue was that it was the earliest movement of philosophy on modern lines. The doctrines and hypotheses of Descartes have been superseded by those of later writers, but the glory of the pioneer is his. His immediate followers, Malebranche, Leibnitz, and Spinoza, carried his teaching much farther. Spinoza indeed developed from it a system of Pantheism to which its author did not seem aware that it tended. Malebranche, on the other hand, gave a more definitely Christian bias to his doctrine.

The attitude of Descartes in respect to revealed religion is not a little singular. His speculations were never permitted to interfere with his acceptance of the dogmas of the Church, neither were they to any appreciable extent shackled by them. In the beginning he expressly resolved to abstain from intruding into the domain of things spiritual, but to this he could not entirely adhere, and later in defence of his doctrine of physics, against which some objections had been urged by divines, he ventured to handle with some freedom such sacred mysteries as the mode in which Transubstantiation takes place. These theses, though condemned informally by several Jesuit writers, did not till long after draw down on him the condemnation of the Church, nor were they withdrawn from

publication. By independent methods he arrived at such fundamental doctrines of religion as the existence and goodness of God and the immortality of the soul, and it seems to have escaped notice that in placing the source of knowledge in innate ideas he was taking up a fundamentally Protestant position, subversive of the authority of the Church. The enmity of the Calvinist divines of Holland, notably Voëtius, did him service at the Vatican, as he had foreseen, and without doubt diverted suspicion of the danger lurking in his doctrine. It may seem strange that he should have encountered enmity where he did instead of where it might have been expected, but Protestantism, though based on Free Thought, and issuing in Free Thought, had built itself a half-way house entrenched behind such formulæ as the Confession of Augsburg, the Heidelberg Catechism, or the Westminster Catechism, and was quite as rigid as the ancient Church in stamping out all independent deviation. So the Philosopher was left undisturbed, following the practices of his Church, and remaining within her fold in very genuine attachment.

It was no less singular that his favourite pupil and closest friend should have been so strictly Protestant a Princess as Elizabeth ; but at least she was no bigot, and refused to close her mind to his teaching at the bidding of Anna Schurmann. It was indeed a high honour for her to have been selected for the dedication of the life-work of one of the foremost thinkers of the day, and it was one of which she was not unworthy. She entered with warm sympathy into the discussions

with other savants which followed the appearance of the book, and expressed her astonishment that the learned world should not have grasped his arguments more clearly, so as at the least to have offered more intelligent objections. She writes :—

My surprise increases each time that I read the objections that have been made against you that it should be possible for those who have employed so many years in meditation and study to fail to understand matters so simple and so clear, the most part not seeming able to distinguish the true from the false, and that M. Gassendus, whose reputation for learning stands so high, should have made, after the Englishman, the least reasonable objections of any. This shows you how much the world has need of the *Treatise on Erudition* which you formerly intended to make. I know you are too kind to refuse a thing so useful to the public, so I need not remind you of the promise you gave to

Your very affectionate friend to serve you,

ELIZABETH.

The Englishman referred to was, of course, Hobbes, who would be no stranger to her ; her brother Rupert had probably already made her acquainted with his writings, and he was also the friend of Lord Charles Cavendish, who was an occasional visitor at the Hague. This accomplished young nobleman was a brother of the Duke of Newcastle, and one of the suitors for the hand of Dorothy Sidney, known as "Sacharissa." He had a great taste for philosophy, and when he was making the grand tour he had an introduction to Mersenne in Paris, who showed him

some of the writings of Descartes, with which he was so much struck that he returned through Holland on purpose to visit the Philosopher, and begged that Mersenne would send him everything his friend should write. Moreover, on his return to England he begged the King to offer some comfortable post or sinecure to M. Descartes, which showed the genuineness of his interest. Without doubt he would pay his respects to the Queen of Bohemia, by whom all young Englishmen were made welcome, and probably talked Cartesianism to the philosophic Princess, but unluckily no record of such conversation survives.

As Elizabeth's reliance on herself was strengthened by Descartes' commendations, her attitude insensibly changed, by degrees the letters become less those of master and pupil than of comrades interested in the same pursuits. Indeed on occasion Elizabeth does not hesitate to offer sensible advice to her mentor, though she still frequently confided her own troubles to him, and looked to him for counsel. But when his judgment was clouded by the natural irritation caused him by the attacks of Voëti^{us} and the scurrilous abuse levelled at him by the partisans of the latter, so that he threatened to leave Holland and take up his abode elsewhere, she pointed out to him that in so doing he would be giving his adversary the advantage, and taking the very course his opponents were trying to force on him. He would better consult his own dignity and show his confidence in the goodness of his cause by ignoring their spite.

In other ways she was able to be useful to him.

He knew no English, and Elizabeth, who spoke and wrote her mother's language with as much ease and fluency as she did German or French, translated for him Sir Kenelm Digby's book on *The Immortality of the Soul*, with which he was anxious to make himself acquainted. His warm thanks must have gratified her. He wrote :—

How grateful I am for the trouble your Highness has taken to bring to my knowledge the book of Sir Kenelm Digby, which I should otherwise be utterly unable to appreciate unless it were rendered into Latin, which Mr. Samson Jonson, who was here just now, assures me it will be shortly.

For the ten most active and formative years of Elizabeth's life this friendship and correspondence was the strongest influence that developed her very remarkable intellect, and it was no less powerful in moulding her character. Descartes's eminently sane views checked her tendency to morbidness on the lower plane and mysticism on the higher, and fostered the sound sense which was at the basis of her nature. For she was never too transcendental to be sensible, and this balance in her preserved her from the danger of becoming pretentious or pedantic, despite her pre-occupation with learned topics. Her letters, whether to her relations or to the learned, are always simple and ring true.

CHAPTER VIII

HOME AFFAIRS

Increasing troubles—Money difficulties—Rupert at home—Affairs in England—Visit of Queen Henrietta Maria, bringing her daughter—Elizabeth not unamiable—Letter to Sir Thomas Rowe—Visit of M. de Schooten—The younger sisters—The kindness of Lord Craven—The five brothers—Rupert and Maurice in England—Attitude of Charles Louis—Edward's marriage and conversion—Distress of his sister—Philip's employment—The Queen encourages d'Épinay—Disapproval of her sons—Duel—d'Épinay slain by Philip—Indignation of the Queen—His banishment—Elizabeth's sympathy with him—The brothers intercede for him—Departure of Elizabeth to Brandenburg.

THE years which brought Elizabeth this valued friendship were chequered ones for her. Troubles of many kinds overshadowed the much-tried household in the Lange Vorhout, of which increasing money difficulties, though not the worst, must have been amongst the most trying and vexatious. Light-hearted Sophie might jest of having to sup on pearls and diamonds, but her more serious sister could not take things so easily, and probably, herself a good manager, as she showed in later life when in a responsible post, was fretted by her mother's total incapacity for economy, and not allowed to interfere. The Queen's very virtues made retrenchment the harder to her. The large

household inevitably cost much to keep up, and to diminish expenses she would have had to part with old and faithful servants who had stood by her through years of difficulty and exile, and she was always loyal to those who served her. So long as she was backed by her brother, who had come to her aid and paid her debts again and again, unlimited credit was to be had, but the menacing position of affairs in England, better understood at the Hague perhaps than at Whitehall, made the wary Dutch tradesmen reluctant to trust the Queen, whose dowry was in arrears, the payment of which was growing more and more problematical.

All ready money had been swallowed up the summer before Descartes' first visit by the rash and misguided attempt of Charles Louis to recover his patrimony, and the mother and sisters had not only the grief and disappointment of his utter and hopeless failure, but anxiety for his fate and that of his brothers, who were taken prisoners, Rupert being retained at Vienna until the next winter, though in a sort of honourable captivity. Fond as Elizabeth was of all her brothers, Rupert was her special comrade, sharing her tastes and pursuits and brightening her often low spirits, for he was a long way yet from his period of gloom, and she must have missed him greatly, and longed for news, which came but seldom. When at length he returned, hurrying home, eager like the boy he was to forestall the letter Sir Thomas Rowe had written to announce his release, he brought cheerfulness to all, and especially to Elizabeth, whom he helped with

her chemical experiments and the studies in physics Descartes had enjoined, but she did not enjoy his company for long; he was not one who could stay idling at home when trouble threatened those who had been kind to him. When his aunt, Queen Henrietta Maria, returned to England, with what aid in men and money she could muster, he went with her, and so did Maurice, both eager to draw the sword on their uncle's behalf. She had come to Holland to bring her daughter Mary to be married to the young William of Orange. Her visit is described in a few graphic touches by Sophie, who was old enough to be taken by her mother to greet her little cousin on her arrival. Always ready to criticise, she professed herself much disappointed in the English Queen, of whose beauty she had heard so much, when she found her thin and sallow, with projecting teeth. Anxiety had told on Henrietta more than on her much-tried sister-in-law, and had robbed her of the delicacy of complexion and youthful grace which had hidden defects and dazzled beholders when she married sixteen years before. Nor did the young princess find more favour with the little critic. Cold and shy, Mary did not recommend herself to her cousins, though from the first she attached herself warmly to her fascinating aunt. She was but a child, coming in age between pretty Henriette and little Sophie, and may well have stood somewhat in awe of the philosophic reputation of her eldest cousin, next whom she sat at the banquet which greeted her arrival.

It is hard, however, to understand why Elizabeth

should have been set down as unamiable. Two letters belonging to this period of her residence at the Hague show her in a most gentle and friendly aspect. One is to her mother's old friend Sir Thomas Rowe, whose health was failing and spirits depressed.

SIR THOMAS ROWE,—I see many reasons in your last letter why you should be weary of the world and willing to leave it, but there are none that show you useless to it, or the same fit to want you. If physicians are necessary in sickness, counsellors in distractions, friends in afflictions and calamities, certainly in general depravities there is as much need of honest men, though unable to correct the manners, at least to mitigate the punishments. There was no danger for Sodom till Lot went out of it, and since the point of honour obliges men to hazard their life for their country, there must be a yet stricter law to make them preserve it for the same cause. Do not therefore flatter yourself into a despair of amendment which will bring you to neglect the means. If this air were not more hurtful than our physicians can be profitable, I would counsel you to follow your first design, but now methinks France should be the better place for your health. I have not spoken all this while of our own interest in your conservation, lest you should believe we were not yet satisfied with the good we have received, and would disturb you, as Saul did Samuel, in your very grave. But I assure you we are all loth to lose so generous a friend, and would purchase his continuance at any rate. My own sickness hindered me three weeks from telling you this truth, and desiring the continuance of your friendship to

Your most affectionate friend,

ELIZABETH.

The illness to which she referred was an intermittent fever, accompanied by a dry cough. She would rally for four or five days, and then the fever would return, and she seemed unable to shake it off. Her physicians recommended her to try the Spa waters, which were at first brought to her, but since change of air and scene were likely to do more for her than the waters, she went there, it appears, and spent some months. In the winter she was again at home, and writes to her friend, M. Descartes, describing, not without a little touch of satire, the visit of a young man, son of an old friend of his, on whose behalf he had asked her kind offices, as he wanted to obtain his late father's post as Professor of Mathematics and Military Fortifications. She writes :—

MONSIEUR DESCARTES,—The son of the late Professor Schooten brought me yesterday the letter you wrote me on his behalf to prevent my promising to favour his rival. And as I testified to him that I not only had no intention of injuring him, but was anxious to serve him as much as I could since you had asked me to be helpful to him, he begged me to recommend him to the curators, of whom I am only acquainted with two, Messieurs Wineman and Berren, the latter being out of town ; so I spoke to the former, who promised to interest himself for the said M. Schooten, the more as there had been an intention of abolishing this professorship as superfluous, which seems the difficulty he will have to contend with, the other competitor being hardly considered in comparison, except by some scrupulous consciences who fear the latter may introduce the errors of the Arminian religion into his mathematical lessons. If he had given me time to beg him to return to learn the

success of my recommendations I should have been able to inform him of some things I think might serve his cause, but he was in such haste to depart that I was obliged to follow him to the very door to ask to whom I was to address my solicitations for him. I know if he had only thought of me as your friend without considering titles, which are embarrassing to those who are not used to them, he would have behaved differently, knowing well that I should act with more than ordinary prudence in any matter that would be agreeable to you. And I beg you to believe I would never lose an opportunity of testifying to you that I am indeed

Yours very affectionately to serve you,

ELIZABETH.

Perhaps the younger sisters were present also on this trying visit, and helped to add to the shy young man's confusion. The dazzling fairness of Henriette and the satirical looks of the sixteen-year-old Sophie may well have alarmed him, gentle and encouraging though the elder might be. For Sophie, as she relates of herself, delighted in mocking at the various visitors, and would even make merry over the oddities of Lord Craven, kind though he was to her. Amongst themselves the young people dubbed him "the little mad mylord," though they were not above dipping into his pockets and availing themselves freely of the liberality he was always ready to extend to the children of "the Queen of Hearts." Very likely he was something of a crank, but they all really loved him, and Sophie gratefully records how on many occasions he furnished her with means for the presents she was obliged to make when her own pockets were

empty. He always had refreshments standing ready in his rooms when they visited him, and gave away numbers of little ornaments such as young folk love. "He needed these attractions," she somewhat unkindly adds, "to make him agreeable, and enable us to tease him a little in private." Other butts of Sophie's wit were the young Prince of Tarentum, the lover of her cousin Louise Henriette of Nassau, and Harry Vane from England, with his long chin. But the witty *Sieur de Zuylichem* was a match for her, and avenged them by teasing her, which her mother encouraged, "in order to sharpen her wit"—sharp enough already.

The grave and gentle Elizabeth endeavoured to exercise some check on the sometimes risqué pranks and jokes of her juniors, and so did Louise Hollandine, for Sophie says of herself: "My manners and behaviour had been so carefully watched over by my two elder sisters that I was even more commended for conduct than for beauty." Elizabeth's discretion was always beyond reproach, but Louise, strict though she may have been with her little sister, was not always circumspect herself.

Of all the five brothers there was not one who during this time was not a cause of anxiety of one sort or another. The three elder were hardly escaped from the perils of their own campaign before they were involved in the troubles in England. Three most promising young men they were. Sir Thomas Rowe's praise of Charles for good looks, manners, and accomplishments has already been quoted, and though

on their first arrival in England Rupert and Maurice were considered somewhat rude and shy, that soon wore off, and they were now distinguished amongst the cavaliers. Of Maurice, who had sowed a plentiful crop of wild oats in his boyhood, Lord Leicester wrote :—

For besides that he hath a body well-made, strong and able to endure hardships, he hath a mind that will not let it be idle if he can have employment. He is very temperate, of a grave and settled disposition, but would very fain be in action, which with God's blessing and his own endeavours will render him a brave man.

Loyal and grateful, these two flung themselves whole-heartedly into their uncle's quarrel, and for the mother and sisters anxiety must have been constant, for they were ever in the forefront of danger.

But the attitude of their brother Charles must have been a cause of much deeper concern. Whether from natural bent or from early upbringing by his Calvinist grandmother, he was more in sympathy with the Puritan party, and, forgetful of the generous kindness he had received from his uncle, not only refused to draw the sword on his behalf, but intrigued with the Parliament, obtaining as a reward for his complaisance an offer to pay his mother's dowry under conditions which the high-spirited Queen indignantly refused to comply with. She would neither acknowledge their right to negotiate while in rebellion against their sovereign, nor would she disavow the action of her younger sons, for which their brother made a grovelling

apology. While they fought he returned for a time to the Hague ; but finding small sympathy at home, went again to England, where he lived under the protection of the Parliament, and even sat at his own request in the Westminster Assembly. So tolerant, not to say indifferent, in matters of religion as he showed himself in later life, suffering his own daughter to make a Catholic marriage from motives of ambition, it is difficult to see anything but self-interest in the line he took. Whoever was most likely to be able to forward his claims on the Palatinate effectively would have his support. As the King put it, he was acting so as to have one chicken the more in his dish. To his mother and to his eldest sister his disloyal and ungrateful action was bitter.

Edward was out of these troubles, and had taken up his abode in Paris ; but during the sad winter of 1645, when affairs in England were marching steadily to their tragic conclusion, he caused his family a grief which was hardly less acute. He had become enamoured of Anne de Gonzague, a sister of the Queen of Poland, and a fervent Catholic, and under her influence resolved to abjure the Protestant religion in which he had been bred, and was received into the Catholic Church. Anne was a clever, eager, almost brilliant woman, a few years his senior, and ambitious of playing a part in politics ; but for religion the match would not have seemed unsuitable, and was indeed more advantageous than might have been looked for by a landless prince. But to Elizabeth, as to her mother, his defection from the family tradition seemed

treason against his father's memory, and against the whole position and attitude of the family. He was no longer one of them ; to her it seemed worse than if he had died. She took the matter deeply to heart, and could not even give him credit for sincerity of motive. She was so used to pouring out her troubles unreservedly to her friend, that, ignoring that he was himself a Catholic, she wrote bitterly to Descartes. After apologising for leaving his last letter so long unanswered she goes on :—

It is with shame that I confess the cause, since it has overthrown all that your lessons seemed to have established in my mind. I believed that a strong resolution only to seek happiness in the things which depend on my will would render me less sensitive to those which come from without, before the folly of one of my brothers made me feel my weakness. For it has disturbed the health of my body and the tranquillity of my soul more than all the misfortunes which have yet happened to me. If you take the trouble to read the gazette you must be aware that he has fallen into the hands of a certain sort of people who have more hatred to our family than love of their own worship, and has allowed himself to be taken in their snares to change his religion and become a Roman Catholic, without making the least pretence which could impose on the most credulous that he was following his conscience. And I must see one whom I loved with as much tenderness as I know how to feel, abandoned to the scorn of the world and the loss of his own soul (according to my creed). If you had not more charity than bigotry it would be an impertinence to speak to you of this matter, and if I were not in the habit of telling you all my faults as the person most able to correct them.

She was troubled because concrete fact refused to come into line with philosophic theory, and bewailed to her mentor her utter failure to reconcile freewill with the decrees of Providence. In his reply Descartes endeavoured to allay rather than meet some of her difficulties, but he, as a Catholic, could not but reproach her gently with a narrow-mindedness unworthy of her in taking so prejudiced a view of her brother's conversion. She seems indeed to have taken her eldest brother's view of the matter in questioning Edward's sincerity, for his own letter setting forth his reasons for the step was very sensible and temperate, and did not deserve Charles's gibe that it was dictated by "Pfaffen," and the latter's own arguments were singularly futile and beside the point. We might have looked for a letter from Elizabeth to the young brother for whom she felt so much concern, but none such is forthcoming.

Next year a fresh trouble befell. The youngest brother Philip was at home for some time while negotiations were going forward to provide some suitable occupation for him. He undoubtedly was the brother of whose illness Elizabeth speaks in one letter :—

For a week past the ill-humour of a sick brother has prevented my making this request (an answer to some of her difficulties), by keeping me always beside him so as to induce him by the complaisance he always shows me to submit himself to the doctor's orders, or to testify my own by trying to amuse him since he persuades himself I am able to do so.

Here again is a picture far from unamiable of Elizabeth sitting beside the couch of a cross brother, endeavouring to solace his weary hours and induce him to "be good." She was occupied also in correspondence about his affairs, as she writes later :—

The treaty which my brother Philip has concluded with the Republic of Venice has given me ever since your departure an occupation much less agreeable than that which you left me touching a matter of which I have very little knowledge, to which I am only called in order to help out the impatience of the young man to whom it was addressed.

This treaty was concerned with a proposal made at the Congress of Münster, then beginning its sittings, through the Plenipotentiary Contarini, that Prince Philip should be employed to raise troops at Hamburg for the service of the Venetian Republic, and transport them through Holland. The suggestion required a good deal of consideration. There were several objections. Philip was but young for so responsible an undertaking, and of a less settled and steadfast character than his brother Maurice, who had been so early entrusted with a somewhat similar command. Moreover, it was exactly the kind of employment the Queen of Bohemia always deprecated for her sons—"I will not have any of my sons a soldier of fortune," she had proudly said when a kind of rajahship in Madagascar was proposed for Rupert, but that was just what all her sons, except the Elector Palatine, became. For what else was to be done with an eager and warlike young prince with no prospects nor any

inheritance? There was no longer any opening in Germany nor in the Low Countries. The dying fires of the Thirty Years' War were about to be put out, and the sole hope of recovering the Palatinate lay in the lengthy negotiations proceeding at Münster. Nothing was to be hoped any more from England, where the King, having suffered hopeless defeat at Naseby and Marston Moor, was languishing in prison, Rupert and Maurice still fighting sporadically or pausing for futile negotiations, while Charles Louis was paying court to the strongest side. It really seemed the best thing Philip could do to embrace the occupation which offered rather than waste time in idleness at home. The career of a Condottiere was practically the only one open to him. No doubt his mother's aversion to the proposal threw a good deal of the correspondence into the hands of Elizabeth. It was some time yet, however, before he could depart on his enterprise. Delays and hindrances of many kinds arose, and summer found him still at the Hague, for this year, as ill-luck would have it, the usual move to Rhenen had not been made.

He was not much over eighteen at this time, a high-spirited, hot-tempered lad; but though he may have been to blame for the impulsive hasty action he took in the unhappy affair in which he became involved, his attitude was by no means to be condemned, and he was upheld by both his elder brothers and by Elizabeth. He showed indeed right feeling and an eager, if boyish, desire to play the protector to his mother and sisters in the absence of his elder

brothers. The Queen, with the easy, careless self-confidence which characterised her, had allowed herself and her younger daughters to be drawn into a very undesirable intimacy with a handsome and fascinating young Frenchman, Jaques d'Épinay, Sieur de Vaux, who had recently appeared in society at the Hague, and, being witty and accomplished as well as good-looking, had contrived to ingratiate himself at the Court in the Lange Vorhout. And this despite his having no very good reputation. It was rumoured that he had left France in consequence of a quarrel with his patron, Gaston, Duke of Orleans, whom he had supplanted in the affections of the notorious Louyson Roger. Certainly hardly the man to have been received by a widowed Queen, and suffered to be on terms of intimacy with her and her bevy of young daughters. But with all her unquestioned virtue, the Queen of Bohemia was indiscreet, unsuspicious, easily dazzled by such brilliant qualities as the young Frenchman possessed. Her eldest daughter was not dazzled, and we may easily imagine, annoyed her mother by her aloofness and disapproving attitude, even if she did not venture on any word of warning.

It is possible that Elizabeth may have spoken of the matter with Philip, the only brother then at home, with whom, as we have seen, she was on terms of affectionate intimacy; but that she, with her scrupulous tender conscience, could have actually counselled any deed of violence is simply unthinkable. The position was quite as strongly disapproved of by Charles Louis,

and when a few months earlier he had been on a visit at the Hague he had not scrupled to show his opinion very plainly. One afternoon he met his mother walking with d'Épinay in the long promenade, and perceiving him to be covered on account of a shower which was falling, promptly knocked his hat off, though he had the Queen's permission to wear it. She was annoyed, but seldom disapproved openly of anything her eldest son chose to do. He had returned to England before the affair assumed its more serious aspect, but he had seen enough to give him grounds for his defence of Philip.

Gossip inevitably sprang up, and worse than gossip, for d'Épinay himself was heard to boast of his "bonnes fortunes" with both the Queen and her second daughter. Scandal assumed very ugly proportions, and the worst construction was put upon a visit of Louise to Leyden. Philip, naturally infuriated, challenged the man, who dared to repeat his insults, and they met one evening in the Lange Vorhout, but were separated before either had got the advantage. As to what followed there is much discrepancy, as there usually is concerning any deed of violence, causing confusion and dismay when even bystanders hardly know exactly what they see. The French account is that Philip had his antagonist waylaid by eight or ten men next day as he was coming from the house of the French Ambassador, where he had dined, and foully done to death, overcome by numbers, though he defended himself bravely. The more credible account, current among the Dutch and Germans, and

recorded in the *Theatrum Europæ*,* is that Philip encountering him the day after the futile duel, instead of challenging him to its continuance, as by all laws of chivalry he should have done, overcome with rage, rushed upon him before any of his attendants could stay him, and plunged his hunting knife into his neck. This version is far more consonant both with the character of the young prince and with the attitude taken by his elder sister and brothers than any tale of assassination planned in cold blood.

Which story was carried to his mother we do not know; but filled with indignant compassion for d'Épinay, whom she had liked, and furious at the imputations cast upon her own good name and that of her second daughter, which Philip's rash deed had rather deepened than dispersed, she refused to listen to a word in his defence, and declared she would never see him again. Elizabeth, presuming to intercede for him, found herself in the same condemnation, though it is not likely that the Queen believed the reports bruited about, originating at the French Embassy, that the Princess had actually instigated the crime. She must have known her daughter too well; but it is highly probable that Elizabeth's attitude of disapproval throughout had incensed her. The French story goes on to say that Elizabeth, too, was banished, never again to be readmitted to her home, but this is a palpable exaggeration, since she did not at once leave home, and then only for a visit intended to be of six or seven months' duration, though other

* *Life of the Princess of Bohemia*, Blaze de Bury.

circumstances caused it to be much more prolonged, and she did not again take up her permanent residence under her mother's roof. Indeed, as regards Philip himself, the sentence of banishment was after a time relaxed, as he is mentioned as at the Hague with Rupert and Maurice in 1648, and being on that occasion invited with them by his cousin Mary Princess of Orange to meet her two brothers, Charles and James, at a banquet.

A very dignified but respectful remonstrance on Philip's behalf was addressed to the Queen by her eldest son. In it he refers to another from Rupert. This shows how her sons regarded the occurrence.

MADAM,—My brother Rupert sending this bearer to your Majesty about his business, I cannot omit to accompany him with my humble request in favour of the suit he hath to you in my brother's behalf ; which, since he can more fully represent it to your Majesty, and that I have by the last post acquainted you with it, I will not be farther troublesome therein. Only, Madam, give me leave to beg your pardon in my brother Philip's behalf, which I should have done sooner if I had thought that he had needed it. The consideration of his youth, of the affront he received, of the blemish had lain upon him all his lifetime if he had not resented it ; but much more that of his blood, and of his nearness to you, and to him to whose ashes you have ever professed more love and value than to anything upon earth, cannot but be sufficient to efface any ill impression which the unworthy representation of the fact by those whose joy is in the divisions of our family, may have made in your mind against him. But I hope I am deceived in what I hear of this, and that this precaution of mine will

seem but impertinent, and will more justly deserve forgiving than my brother's action ; since I will still be confident that the good of your children, the honour of your family, and your own, will prevail with you against any other consideration : and thus I rest

Your Majesty's

Most humble and obedient son and servant,

CHARLES.

This 10th of July, 1646.

What the effect of this letter was on the Queen's mind we do not learn, but had she relented, it was impossible for Philip to remain at the Hague. He had in fact mounted his horse and ridden to the coast immediately it was found his enemy was dead, and on 4th July a proclamation was made by order of the States of Holland summoning Prince Philip and those of his suite concerned in the crime for trial. No less could be done under the circumstances ; legal measures were due, and demanded by the French Embassy, and the Queen was not desirous to use her influence with the Court of Nassau to obtain indulgence for her son. The proclamation was repeated on the ninth of the same month, but no attempt was made to pursue the fugitive, and he proceeded straight to Hamburg, via Denmark, to raise his levies for the Republic, and was there on the 21st, as was mentioned in a letter of the King of Poland to M. de la Thuillerie. The King, however, expressed his belief that the Venetians were not in earnest, and intended to let the scheme drop. In August Contarini, who had been instrumental in arranging the plan, wrote : " There is every

appearance that the levies of Prince Philip will go off in smoke." They did come into existence, however, for two years later there is mention in the correspondence of Brasset and Mazarin (Bibliothèque Nationale) of a proposal for making one regiment of the two raised by Prince Philip for Venice. No great success attended his effort. Whether he was too young and inexperienced, or whether the rumours about him and the enmity of France injured him, his career was broken; he made no name for himself; he took service in the Spanish army, and fell at the head of a regiment of cavalry at the siege of Rethel in 1650.

The whole affair was the greatest distress to the affectionate heart and sensitive temperament of Elizabeth, in whom philosophy never quenched the essential womanliness of her nature. There must have been painful tension between her and her mother and sister for some time, and if the reports as to her own share set about by the French Embassy reached her, she must have been deeply wounded. It was currently said that "this black deed was concerted by the counsels of the Princess Elizabeth, and that the Queen drove away both her son and her daughter, and would never see either again." * It was at any rate desirable that the latter should go away from home for a time, and she resolved on a visit of some months' duration to her relations in Brandenburg, where so much of her childhood had been passed, and thither she repaired in the autumn.

* Blaze de Bury.

CHAPTER IX

THE CONSOLATIONS OF PHILOSOPHY

Elizabeth has need of her friend—He leaves Endegeest—Her letters on her illness and troubles—He urges distraction of mind—Contrast of his temperament with that of the Princess—He proposes the consideration of Seneca's Treatise, *De Vitâ Beatâ*—The three moral laws deduced—Elizabeth's estimate of Seneca—Her questions on Egotism and Altruism—Interruptions at Ryswick—Perplexities of fate and free-will—She begs for the continuance of his letters.

THROUGH these many troubles Elizabeth had need of all the support and aid that friendship or philosophy could afford her, and it must have been an added trial when in the spring of 1643 Descartes left Endegeest, whence he could so easily have come to visit and console her, and though not quite out of reach, was beyond the possibility of frequent meetings. Always restless, he had tired of his charming little château and removed to one at Egmont, near Alkmaar, where he had a garden in which he took great delight. She must have missed him sorely, yet perhaps, after all, his regular and bracing letters were a more precious and lasting possession, containing as they did a complete branch of his philosophy of life. The gist of this correspondence was subsequently incorporated

by him in his *Treatise on the Passions of the Soul*, and, together with her replies—those letters found at Rosendal—form so complete a sequence that it seemed best to gather some leading passages from them into a separate chapter, showing the spirit in which Elizabeth envisaged her troubles, rather than break up the narrative by quoting from them as they occurred, though this involves retracing our steps a few years.

Not very long after his departure Elizabeth appears to have had an illness of much the same nature as that to which she refers in her letter to Sir Thomas Rowe. On that occasion no letters were exchanged, as Descartes came himself to the Hague and thought he had done her a great deal of good, as he refers to this when she had a more serious attack of low fever lasting three or four weeks, and he, having written to his friend de Pollot for particulars, offered to repeat his visit and cure her as he had done the summer before, believing that her ailment was as much of the mind as of the body. With her sensitive temperament no doubt the one reacted on the other. The proposal was communicated by de Pollot, who at the same time told her how much Descartes himself was in need of quiet, so she wrote dissuading him from undertaking the journey on her account :—

MONSIEUR DESCARTES,—I perceive that the charms of a solitary life have not robbed you of social virtues, but I should be sorry if the generous kindness you show to your friends and have testified by the care you show for my health should induce you to make the journey, since M. de Palotti has told me that you believe repose to be necessary

for your preservation. And I assure you that the doctors who see me every day and examine all the symptoms of my illness have not discovered the cause nor ordered such salutary remedies as you have done from afar. If they had been clever enough to suspect the share which my mind had in the disorder of the body, I should not have had sufficient frankness to avow it. But to you, Monsieur, I do so without scruple, assuring myself that a simple recital of my faults will not rob me of the share I have in your friendship, but will confirm it to me all the more as you will see what need I have of it.

Know then that I have a body imbued with a large share of the weakness of my sex, quick to feel the afflictions of the soul and without strength to rally from them, being of a temperament subject to depression and living in an air which easily affects those who cannot take much exercise ; it does not need long oppression of the heart by sadness to act on the spleen and infect the body with vapours. I imagine that the low fever and dry cough which have not yet left me, although the warmth of the season and the walks I have had have brought back my strength a little, proceed from that. This makes me consent to the advice of the physicians to drink the Spa waters (which can be brought here without spoiling), having found from experience that they do good. But I will not take them without knowing your opinion, since you are so good as to wish to cure the body with the soul.

I will go on to confess to you that even now, when I do not place my happiness in things which depend on fortune or on the will of others, and do not esteem myself absolutely miserable though I should never see my House restored nor my family out of poverty, I cannot but consider the injurious accidents that befall them as an evil nor the useless efforts which I make to help them without an

anxiety that is no sooner calmed by reason than a fresh disaster provokes fresh trouble. And I think if my life could be entirely known to you, you would find it stranger that a spirit so sensitive should be preserved so long and through so many crosses in a body so weak without counsel but that of its own reason nor consolation but that of conscience, than you do the causes of this illness. I spent all last winter in such troublesome affairs that they hindered my availing myself of the permission you gave me to lay before you the difficulties I might meet with in my studies, and gave me others which I should need more stupidity than I have to disembarass myself of. I only found leisure just before my illness to read the Philosophy of M. le chevalier Digby, written in English, whence I thought to draw arguments to refute yours since the summary of chapters showed me two places where he professed to have done so, but when I reached them I was astonished to find that he had understood nothing less than that which he approved of your sentiment on reflection nor of that which he denies on refraction, and not considering why a soft body which yields retards the one and that a hard body only resists the other. Part of what he says on the action of the heart is more excusable if he has not read what you wrote to the physician at Louvain. Dr. Jonson said he would translate these two chapters for you, and I think you will have no great curiosity about the rest of the book, for it is of the calibre and follows the method of the English priest who calls himself Albanus, although it contains some fine meditations, and one could hardly expect more from a man who spends the best part of his life in the pursuit of love or ambition. I shall follow no pursuit more ardently nor more constantly than that of remaining all my life

Your very affectionate friend to serve you,

This 24th of May.

ELIZABETH.

Reading over what I have told you about myself I see I have forgotten one of your maxims, which was to write nothing which might be misinterpreted by less charitable readers. But I trust so entirely in the care of M. de Palotti that I know my letter will reach you safely, and to your discretion that you will save it by fire from the risk of falling into evil hands.

The translation which Descartes wished for, Elizabeth eventually made for him herself, as mentioned in a previous chapter.

In his reply he prefaces his exhortations to courage and cheerfulness by a wise sympathy, writing :—

The obstinacy of the fate which has dogged your House has given you continual subjects of vexation, and it is only the strength of your virtue which can render your soul content amidst the buffets of fortune. . . . The difference between great souls and those which are low and vulgar consists principally in this : that the vulgar give way to their passions, and are happy or miserable according to whether the things that happen are to them agreeable or displeasing ; while the others have reasoning powers so firm and so elevated that, though they also have passions and often stronger ones than the common herd, yet reason remains always the mistress and makes their afflictions serve them and even contribute to the perfect felicity they enjoy in this life. . . . Though performing all that lies in their power to render fortune favourable, they esteem it (i.e. this mortal life) so little in comparison with eternity that they consider its events almost as we do those of stage plays. And like the sad and lamentable histories which we see represented in the theatre, they may give us often as much entertainment as those which are gay,

though they draw tears from our eyes. As devotion to a sick friend, even exposing oneself to death to save him, is a praiseworthy and virtuous act which gives magnanimous souls more joy than the sadness which rouses their compassion can give them pain . . . and as the greatest favours of fortune do not intoxicate them nor render them insolent, so the greatest adversities cannot subdue them nor render them so sad as to make the body sick to which they are joined.

To prevent physical effects of sorrow by an exercise of will was a counsel of perfection hard to follow for one of Elizabeth's temperament, prone, like her father, to nervous depression ; but, if difficult, it was all the more salutary. In his next he advises her that the best remedy for her malady lay in diverting her attention as much as possible from it and considering her symptoms only when prudence dictated it, as she will only derive benefit from the waters while she withdraws her mind from sad thoughts ; she should occupy her mind and senses with pleasant themes :—

imitating those who, looking at the greenness of a wood, the colour of a flower, the flight of bird, and such things as require no attention, persuade themselves that they are thinking of nothing. This is not to waste time, but to employ it to the best advantage, because it gives hope of recovery to perfect health.

This seems to have been addressed to her when in the country, whether at Spa, where some of her biographers think she passed some time in the summer, or at the family home at Rhenen. He told her how

much benefit he derived from the pleasures of his own garden, and quotes his personal experience as one who, having been condemned by the doctors to an early death, had always accustomed himself to look at everything which presented itself from its pleasantest side, and thus making the best of things, had found that the sources of his chief contentment lay within himself. Though his health had remained always delicate, his was a temperament far removed from the sensitiveness which characterised Elizabeth. He acknowledged that he found neither sorrow nor danger had the power of depriving him of sleep or appetite ; under the greatest afflictions his sleep was sound, his hunger that of a dog ; only under the excitement of great joy did he find that he could neither eat nor sleep. This was not a normal experience, and it was a height of stoicism which no effort on Elizabeth's part could enable her to attain. Still, she did her best, and no doubt was the better for the effort. His friendship and sympathy were sweet to her, his counsel bracing. Her next letter shows her more responsive :—

MONSIEUR DESCARTES,—Your letters always serve as an antidote against melancholy, even when they do not instruct me, turning my mind from the disagreeable subjects which occur every day to make it contemplate the happiness which I possess in the friendship of a person of your merit, to whose counsel I can confide the conduct of my life. Could I but conform to your last precepts, no doubt I should promptly cure myself of all maladies of body and weaknesses of soul. But I own I find it hard to detach my senses and imagination from the things which are con-

tinually brought before them by discourse or by letters which I cannot avoid without failing in my duty. I admit that by effacing from the idea of an affair all that makes it vexatious to me (which I believe is represented solely by my imagination) I should judge more sanely and find remedies as quickly as the affliction I draw from it. But I have never been able to practise this till after passion has played its part. There is a something of surprise in misfortune, though foreseen, which I am never able to master till after a lapse of time during which my body becomes so disordered that it takes more months to recover than ever pass without some new subject of trouble. Besides that, I have to govern my mind with care to give it agreeable subjects; the least failure makes it fall back on those things which afflict it, and I fear if I do not employ it while I am taking the waters of Spa, it will become more melancholy. If I could profit as you do by all that presents itself to my senses, I could divert myself without trouble. It is just now that I feel the inconvenience of being a little sensible, for if I were not so at all I might find common pleasures in the midst of which I must live to take this medicine with profit, and if I were so to the point you are I should be able to cure myself as you have done. With this the curse of my sex forbids me the pleasure I should have had in a journey to Egmont to learn all the wisdom you draw from your new garden. At any rate I will console myself with the permission you give me to ask sometimes for news in the character of

Your very affectionate friend to serve you,

ELIZABETH.

This 12/22 of June.

I learn with much pleasure that the Academy of Groningen has done you justice.

Her friend would not hear of her accusing herself of feebleness of will or deficiency of reasoning power. He assures her :—

I remark always in your letters thoughts so clear and reasoning so cogent that I could hardly persuade myself that the mind capable of conceiving them is lodged in a body so feeble and sick. . . . Consider all the advantages which may be drawn from the thing which yesterday appeared so irremediable a disaster, and turn your attention from all the evils which have been imagined or forecast. For there are no events so fatal nor so absolutely bad that a person of intelligence cannot regard them from some side which will make them appear favourable. And your Highness may draw this general consolation from the buffets of fortune, that they perhaps contributed to make you cultivate your mind to the point which you have attained, and that is a good which might outweigh an empire. Great prosperity often dazzles and intoxicates to that degree that it rather possesses those that have it than is possessed by them ; and although that does not happen to minds of the stamp of yours, it furnishes always less occasion to exercise its virtue than does adversity. And I believe that as there is no good in the world which one can absolutely call good except good sense, so there is no evil from which, having that, one cannot draw some good.

Evidently the summers in those days were no more to be relied on than in our own, for, writing in July, Descartes deplores the untimely cold with its depressing effect on Elizabeth, fearing the waters may fail to do her the good they should have done in warmer weather. He promises to miss no opportunity of

writing since she takes so much pleasure in his letters, and her doctors advised her to occupy her mind without the fatigue of serious study, and adds :—

Mine are not letters that will cause you any emotion, and even before reading them you need not apprehend finding in them any such disquieting news as the malignity of fortune has so often accustomed you to receive.

He now bethought himself of a new occupation for her mind, less exacting than the problems in mathematics he used to set her, and proposed to embark on the discussion with her of the Treatise of Seneca, *De Vità Beatà*, thinking it would suggest many topics of interest to her and pertinent to her need. With the book he sent several reflections thereupon, premising first of all that in considering what constituted a happy life, a clear distinction must be drawn between good fortune or luck (*l'heur*) and beatitude, a higher thing. For, he writes—

Luck only depends on things outside ourselves, from whence it comes that those are esteemed more happy than wise to whom some good fortune has befallen beyond their own power to procure, instead of which happiness consists, it seems to me, in a perfect contentment of spirit and an interior satisfaction, which those most favoured by fortune do not ordinarily acquire, and which the sages enjoy without fortune's favour.

He lays down three moral laws for the gaining of tranquillity of spirit. First, wisdom to use the intellect to discover what ought or ought not to be done in all the occurrences of life ; secondly, a firm

and constant will to execute all that reason points out, unswayed by passion or appetite ; thirdly, the mastery of desire, that a man should accustom himself not to wish for anything which is out of his power to obtain. He had written three letters on the topic before Elizabeth's answer reached him ; she evidently took time to study the book before writing. Her letter is misdated April, but M. Foucher de Careil gives the probable date in August, so it was doubtless written from Rhenen, where, being with the rest of the family, she would have less leisure for study, and she refers in it to having been much occupied with the illness of her brother. She was, as appears, not altogether enamoured of the author chosen :—

MONSIEUR DESCARTES,—I have found, in examining the book you have recommended to me, many fine periods and well-imagined sentences, giving me a subject for agreeable meditation, but not much instruction in that of which it treats, since they are without method and the author does not follow out that which he proposes to himself. For instead of pointing out the shortest way to beatitude, he contents himself with showing that riches and luxury do not make one incapable of it. I was bound to write this to you lest you should think I was of your opinion by prejudice or laziness. I not only ask you to go on correcting Seneca because your manner of reasoning is more remarkable, but because it is the most natural that I have met with, and seems not so much to teach me new things as to draw out of my mind knowledge which I had hitherto not perceived. Thus I cannot yet free myself from a doubt whether one can attain the beatitude of which you speak without the aid of that which does not depend

absolutely on our will, since there are maladies which take from us the power to reason and consequently that of enjoying a reasonable satisfaction, and others which diminish our strength and hinder us from following the maxims good sense would have forged, and make the most moderate man liable to be carried away by his passions and incapable of disentangling himself from the accidents of fortune which require prompt resolution. . . .

In reply to his next letter, which was occupied with a comparison of the philosophies of Seneca, Epicurus, Zeno, and Aristotle, she writes :—

I think you will have seen by my last of the 16th that yours of the 4th had reached me. And I need not add that it gave me more light on the subject of which it treats than any I could have gained by reading or meditation. You know too well what you do, what I am capable of and what others have done, though by an excess of generosity you would ignore the obligation you place me under by giving me so useful and pleasant an occupation as that of reading and pondering your letters. Without the last one I should not have understood what Seneca means by beatitude as well as I think I do now. I attribute the obscurity to be found in his book, as well as in most of the ancient writers, to a manner of explaining quite unlike ours, so that the same things which are problematical amongst us may pass for hypotheses with them, and the want of connection and order which he observes to the design of gaining admirers by astonishing the imagination, rather than disciples by informing the judgment; that Seneca uses fine phrases as others poetry or fable to attract youth to follow his opinion. The manner in which he refutes Epicurus confirms this. He preserves from the

said philosopher *quam nos virtuti legem dicimus, eam ille dicit voluptati*, and a little before he says in the name of these sectaries: *ego enim nego quemquam posse jucunde vivere nisi simul et honeste vivat*. Whence it clearly appears that they give the name of pleasure to the joy and satisfaction of mind which the writer calls *consequentia summum bonum*. And nevertheless in all the rest of his book he speaks of this Epicurean pleasure more as a Satyr than a philosopher, as if it were purely sensual. But I owe him much since he has been the cause of your taking the trouble to explain their opinions and reconcile their differences better than they could have done for themselves, and thereby removing a powerful objection against the search for the Sovereign Good which none of these great minds have been able to define, and against the authority of human reason, since it has not enlightened these excellent persons in the knowledge of that which was most necessary and nearest their heart. I hope you will continue with what Seneca has said or what he ought to say to teach me the means of fortifying my understanding so as to choose the best in all the actions of my life, which appears to me the main difficulty, since it is impossible not to follow the good way when one knows it. I beg you will tell me frankly if I abuse your kindness and ask too much of your leisure for the satisfaction of

Your very affectionate friend to serve you,

ELIZABETH.

Her next, written probably still from Rhenen, early in September, answers something he had said of the peculiarities of her education, being obliged, as she says, to exercise her judgment early in the conduct of a life narrow and devoid of the pleasures and flatteries which would have made her think much of

herself, while she was in subjection longer than was usual to the rule of a governess. An interesting passage in this letter seems as though it must refer to the rash and foolish though well-intentioned action of her parents, which had entailed on themselves and their children such long years of expiation. It runs :—

It is not always prosperity, nor the flattery which accompanies it, which I hold absolutely capable of depriving well-born souls of fortitude and hindering them from receiving change of fortune philosophically. But I am persuaded that the multitude of accidents which may surprise persons governing the public, without giving them time to examine the most useful expedient, may often carry them away (however virtuous they may be) to commit actions which may cause afterwards a repentance which you would say was one of the principal obstacles to beatitude.

The rest of the letter is occupied with carrying on the discussion in the form of the pursuit of contentment. At the end she refers to a probable move to a house belonging to the Prince of Orange at Ryswick, lent them while their own was being cleaned. She seems to have found society there rather tiresome after the quiet of Rhenen, and in reference to some pronouncements of Descartes on the wisdom of weighing the value of benefits bestowed against sacrifice entailed in the matter of altruism, she writes quaintly :—

Since I have been here I have had a vexatious experience of it, for I was hoping to profit by a sojourn in the fields to employ more time in study, and I have found incomparably less leisure than I should have enjoyed at the Hague

by the diversions of those who have nothing to do, and though it is very unjust to deprive me of real benefits to bestow imaginary ones on them, I am constrained to yield to the established laws of civility, impertinent though they are, lest I make enemies. Since I have been writing this I have been interrupted more than seven times by these intrusive visits.

Hers was an unselfish nature, far more likely to take a morbid pleasure in self-immolation than to trample on the claims of others for her own ends ; she needed the reminder that it is not wise to sacrifice a great good for ourselves to a trivial gratification for another ; reason should rule even the impulse of generosity.

Elizabeth still remained dissatisfied with Seneca and pleaded that Descartes should give her rather his own principles of morality, and in answer to this request he wrote her one of his most important letters, one which has been described as a noble essay of spiritual ethics. In this he lays down three sure foundations of right conduct and contentment—the goodness of God, the immortality of the soul, and the greatness of the universe. For right conduct is needed knowledge of truth and the habit of acquiescing in it when known. Since God alone knows all things, it is enough that we understand those which lie immediately about our path, receiving in good part all things which happen to us as being expressly sent by God on whom all things depend, whose perfections are infinite, whose power is boundless, and whose decrees are infallible. Of the immortality of the soul

as a source of happiness he says the nature of the soul, since it can subsist without the body, is more noble, and capable of enjoying an infinite number of satisfactions which are not to be found in this life, the implicit deduction being that these powers of enjoyment, since they exist, must find their fulfilment elsewhere. The extent of the universe affords him another ground of hope, unlike those whose faith is shaken by finding this earth is not the centre of all things. "This earth is not our chief abode, nor this life our best life." On these three things he would found a quiet confidence. To quote his own words :—

Man would be in the councils of God, and undertake with Him the charge of guiding the world, a fruitful source of vain disquiet and vexation. After we have recognised the goodness of God, the immortality of the soul; and the greatness of the universe, there is yet another truth of which the knowledge seems to me most useful, which is that although each one of us is an individual separate from others, and consequently possessing interests in some measure distinct from those of the rest of the world, one ought always to remember, though one may know one exists alone, we are indeed part of the universe, and more particularly part of the country, of the state, of the family to which one is attached by dwelling, by oath, or by birth. And hence that we should always prefer the interest of the whole of which we form a part to that of the particular self.

On this foundation, a more reasoned one than that of Seneca, as Elizabeth acknowledged, he would build the *Summum Bonum*, the Sovereign Good after which she sought. Her answer is interesting, showing the

points on which she was still unsatisfied. Her difficulties arose from actual experience in a life very unlike the philosophic calm and solitude which environed her master :—

Although your observations on the sentiments of Seneca on the Sovereign Good rendered the reading more profitable than I could have found it by myself, I am not sorry to exchange it for truths so necessary as those which comprise the means of strengthening the understanding to discern the best in all the actions of life, especially if you will add the explanation which my stupidity needs touching the utility of the knowledge which you propose. That of the existence of God and of His attributes might console under the misfortunes which may happen in the ordinary course of nature and the order of which He has established, such as losing property by storm, health by the infection of the air, friends by death, but not those which are imposed by men whose choice appears free, unless we had faith which could persuade us that God takes care to rule the wills and has determined the fortunes of each one before the creation of the world. The immortality of the soul and the knowledge that it is more noble than the body is capable of making us seek death as well as despise it, since we cannot doubt that we should live more happily exempt from the maladies and passions of the body. And I am surprised that those who say they are persuaded of this truth and live without revealed law, should prefer a painful life to an advantageous death. The great extent of the universe, which you have displayed in the third book of your Principles, is useful to detach our affections from that which we see, but it also divides the particular providence which is the foundation of theology from our idea of God. The consideration that we are a part of the

Whole the advantage of which we ought to seek is indeed the source of all generous actions, but I find a difficulty in the conditions you prescribe. How measure the evils one gives oneself for the public good against the good to be attained without their seeming the greatest, inasmuch as the idea of them is more distinct ? And what rule should we have for the comparison of things which are not equally known to us ? Like our own merit and that of those with whom we live. An arrogant nature would always make the balance incline to his own side, and a modest one esteem himself less than he deserved. To profit by the particular truths of which you speak one ought to know exactly all those passions and those circumstances of which the greater part are unknowable.

The next letter carries on the discussion of the same topics and begs for further enlightenment. She continues :—

I believe you will clear up all these doubts. . . . I should not venture to ask you if I did not know that you leave no work incomplete and that in undertaking to instruct any one so stupid as I am you will be prepared for the inconveniences it will bring. This is what makes me continue to tell you that I am not yet persuaded by the reasons that prove the existence of God and that He is the unchangeable cause of all the effects which do not depend on the free choice of man and also of those which do depend on it. From His sovereign perfection it follows of necessity that He must be so, that is to say, that He could not have given free-will to man ; but since we feel we have it, it seems to me repugnant to common sense to think it dependent in its operations as it is in its being. If one is persuaded of the immortality of the soul, it is impossible

to doubt that it would be happier after its separation from the body (which is the origin of all the discomforts of life, as the soul of its highest pleasures) without the opinion of M. Digby (whose writings you have seen), who was made to believe in the doctrine of purgatory, being persuaded that the passions which had dominated reason during life must leave some vestiges in the soul after the decease of the body which they had tormented, so much the more as they found no means of satisfying themselves in a substance so pure. I do not see how that accords with its immateriality. But I in nowise doubt that if life is not evil in itself, it ought to be abandoned for a condition known to be better.

By the particular providence which is the foundation of theology I understand that by which God has from all Eternity foreordained means as wonderful as His Incarnation for a part of creation so inconsiderable in comparison with the rest, as you represent this globe in your Physics, and that in order to be glorified therein, which seems an unworthy end for the Creator of this great universe. But I offer this rather as the objection of our theologians than my own, having always believed it a thing impertinent in finite creatures to judge the final cause of the actions of an infinite Being. . . . I have always been in a condition which renders my life very useless to those whom I love, but I seek to preserve it with far more care since I have had the happiness of knowing you, because you have shown me the means of living far more happily than I had done before.

She was still, however, far from satisfied; the insoluble problem how to reconcile free-will in those whose actions troubled her with the ruling of Providence, in which she sought to trust, still baffled her, and she was unable to free her mind from the pessimistic views to which she was prone. This comes out

in the last part of the letter she wrote on the conversion of her brother Edward :—

I confess to you that while I cannot understand that the independence of free choice is no less repugnant to the idea which we have of God than its dependence to its liberty, it is impossible to adjust them, since it is equally impossible for the will to be at the same time free and bound by the decrees of Providence and for the Divine Power to be both infinite and limited at once. I do not see the compatibility of which you speak, nor how this dependence of the will can be of another nature than its liberty unless you take the trouble to explain to me. With regard to contentment, I confess that present possession is much more assured than the expectation of the future, on whatever good reason it may be founded. But I can hardly persuade myself that we have more good in life than evil, for man has more occasions to receive displeasure than pleasure, there are an infinite number of errors for one truth, so many ways of wandering for one that leads the right way, so many people with both will and power to injure for the few who love to serve : in short, all that depends on the will and course of the rest of the world is capable of troubling us ; and according to your own sentiment there is nothing which depends absolutely on ourselves sufficient to give a real and lasting satisfaction. For prudence in that which concerns human society I do not expect an infallible rule, but I should be glad to see that which you would give to one who living only for himself in whatever profession he might have, would not cease to work for others, if I dared ask more light after having employed so ill that which you have already given to

Your very affectionate friend to serve you,

ELIZABETH.

The last three letters and that about M. de Schooten were written from the Hague in the winter of 1645. All next spring and summer Elizabeth was much engrossed with her brother Philip, first with the negotiations with the Venetian Republic, and later with the fatal affair of the Comte d'Épinay; her letters, therefore, were briefer and fewer than usual. In July, her journey to Berlin having been decided upon, she wrote a short letter in the hope of seeing Descartes before her departure. He was at this time contemplating his visit to Paris.

MONSIEUR DESCARTES,—Since your journey is fixed for the 3/13 of this month (July) I must remind you of the promise you made me of quitting your agreeable solitude to give me the happiness of seeing you before my departure deprives me of the hope of it for six or seven months, which is the longest time which the permission of the Queen my mother and my brother, and the opinion of the friends of our family prescribe for my absence. But it would seem too long if I were not assured you would continue the kindness of letting me profit by your meditations in your letters, since without their assistance the cold of the north and the calibre of the people with whom I shall have to associate would extinguish the little ray of common sense which I have by nature and learn to cultivate by your method. They promise me leisure and tranquillity enough to be able to study in Germany, and I shall take with me no greater treasure nor one from which I shall draw more satisfaction than your writings. I hope you will permit me to take the one on *The Passions*, though it has not yet been able to calm those which our last misfortune has excited. Your presence must bring the cure which neither

your maxims nor my reasonings have been able to apply. The preparations for my journey and the affairs of my brother Philip, joined to a becoming complaisance for the entertainment of my aunt, have hindered me till now from sending you the thanks I owe for the benefit of this visit, and beg you to receive them now from

Your very affectionate friend to serve you,

ELIZABETH.

I am obliged to send this by a messenger because its despatch is of more consequence to me just now than its safety.

From this it would seem that one of her aunts, either the Electress Dowager or the Princess Catherine, must have travelled from Brandenburg to fetch her, or very probably the former may have come for the marriage of her son with Louise Henriette of Nassau, which took place this same summer, and naturally her niece would avail herself of the escort on her long journey. This would put the fixing of its date out of her own power, but it is to be hoped she did not miss the meeting with her friend on which her heart was set, since, little as either could have foreseen, it was the last opportunity of seeing one another they were ever to have.

CHAPTER X

BRANDENBURG

Society in Berlin—Elizabeth welcomed by her relatives—Study of Macchiavelli—She discusses his book with Descartes—The waters of Hornhausen—Illness of Henriette—Pedantry of the Berliners—Elizabeth decides to remain in Brandenburg during the Treaty of Westphalia—She has the smallpox—Peace signed—The restoration of the Palatinate—Execution of the King of England—Descartes writes to condole—Comments of Anna van Schurmann—Disappointed of return to Heidelberg—Sadness of the Queen.

ELIZABETH did not, after all, find her stay in Brandenburg by any means such exile as she had anticipated, though as an intellectual centre Berlin was at this date far behind the Hague. It had been the home of her childhood, and she found an affectionate circle ready to extend a warm welcome. The grandmother who brought her up had died two years before, but her aunt Catherine was still living there; and Charlotte, the Electress Dowager, was extremely fond of her brother's children, and especially of Elizabeth, who had been so much in her own nursery. The harsh and unfriendly George William was dead, and his son Frederic William, Elizabeth's contemporary, her play-fellow in the nursery, her friend and companion in

student days at Leyden, was reigning in his stead and was already setting about winning for himself the title of "the Great Elector." He had but lately married her favourite cousin Louise Henriette, daughter of Frederic Henry of Nassau, who had been almost like another younger sister to her; they had been much together at the Hague and at Rhenen in the days when Frederic William was studying at the University and making boyish love to Louise Hollandine while his future bride was but a little girl. Then there was his sister Hedwig, afterwards married to the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, just growing into womanhood and developing much intellectual promise which her cousin delighted to foster, reading with her, forming her mind, and directing her taste. Elizabeth's first letter to Descartes from her new surroundings was in a more cheerful tone than she had been able for long to command:—

MONSIEUR DESCARTES,—You are right in thinking that the entertainment I find in your letters is different to that which I had on the journey, since they give me a much greater and more lasting satisfaction; although I found in it all that the affection and caresses of my relations could afford me, yet I regard these as things which may change while the truths which your letters teach me leave impressions on my mind which will always contribute to the contentment of my life. I have a thousand regrets that I have not brought the book which you took the trouble to examine and give me your opinion on, by land, being persuaded that the luggage which I sent to Hamburg by sea would be here sooner than ourselves, but it had not come when we arrived on the 7/17 September



Photo.

C. M. Dewald, the Hague

FREDERIC WILLIAM, ELECTOR OF BRANDENBURG, WITH HIS WIFE
LOUISE HENRIETIE OF NASSAU

From a painting by Honthorst in the Mauritshuis. By permission

last. This is why I can only recall the maxims of the author, as well as a very bad memory will furnish, from a book which I have not seen for six years. But I remember that I then approved some not as good in themselves, but because they would cause less evil than those made use of by a number of ambitious, imprudent people I have known, which only tend to embroil matters and leave the rest to fortune, while those of this author tend to establishment.

The book she refers to is Macchiavelli's *Prince*, on which she had asked the opinion of Descartes. The reader cannot but see in this discussion of his principles that what Elizabeth had in mind were the many confused and unsuccessful attempts for the recovery of the Palatinate which had distracted her early years. Out of her own experience also she endorses his recommendation of severity, for, as she says, violence is more supportable to a people than the long misery civil war brings in its train. Of this misery she had seen enough, since her life had synchronised with the Thirty Years' War just drawing to a close. She revolted naturally from the opinion of Cæsar Borgia, quoted with approval by Macchiavelli, that the Prince should employ for his harshest measures some minister whom he can afterwards disavow and sacrifice to the hatred of his people. She "would prefer the condition of the meanest peasant in Holland to that of the minister who would execute such orders or the Prince who would give them." The discussion is somewhat lengthy and academic. At the end she refers to a principle laid down in the preface that only those

familiar with public life can understand the science of government, saying :—

I find the rule you observe in his preface to be false because he has known no one so clear-sighted in all these matters as you are, and consequently from your private retirement, out of the distractions of the world, capable nevertheless of instructing princes how they ought to govern, as your writings show. For myself who enjoy but the title, I only try to put in practice the rule you lay down at the end of your letter, trying to take pleasure in present things as much as I can. Here I find little difficulty, being in a house where I have been cherished from my childhood, where every one conspires to caress me, although they sometimes distract me from more useful occupations. I easily bear with this inconvenience for the pleasure of being beloved by my relations. This, Monsieur, is the reason that I have not had leisure sooner to send you an account of our successful journey, which passed without any inconvenience, and with the promptitude which I mentioned above, nor of the miraculous fountain of which you spoke at the Hague. I have been at Cheuningen [*sic*], only a league distant, where we met a whole family who were returning thence. The Elector would have taken me there to see it, but since the rest of our party decided for another amusement I could not contradict them and contented myself with seeing and tasting the water, of which there are different springs and different tastes, but two are principally used, of which the first is clear, salt and purgative, the other slightly whitish with a taste like milky water, and is said to be refreshing. They talk of a number of miraculous cures which have been made, but I have not heard of them from anybody worthy of credence. They say truly that the place is full of poor people professing to have been

born deaf, blind, lame, or deformed, who have found cure in the fountain. But since they are mercenary folk in a nation credulous of miracles, I do not think this ought to persuade sensible people. Of all the Court of my cousin the Elector, only his Master of the Horse found any benefit in it. He had a wound under the right eye and lost the sight on that side from a little skin that grew over the eye, and the salt water of this fountain being applied to it dissipated the skin so much that he can now distinguish people with the left eye shut. Besides, being a man of full habit, the purge did him no harm and does good to many. . . . I have here so little leisure for writing that I am obliged to send you this patchwork, in which you may see by the difference of the pen how many times I have been interrupted. But I would rather appear before you with all my faults than let you believe I have a vice so far removed from my nature as to forget my friends in absence, especially one whom I could not cease to love without ceasing to be reasonable, as you, Monsieur, to whom I shall be all my life,

Your very affectionate friend to serve you,

ELIZABETH.

Berlin, this 30th of September.

The waters referred to were those of Hornhausen, about which Descartes had made inquiry.

1 November found her still equally content with her surroundings, and writing in the same pleasant vein. Descartes had written under cover to Sophie, who forwarded his letters, congratulating her on her cheerfulness and reminding her that good spirits would do more than anything to preserve bodily health. He adds :—

And I even think that the things one does with gaiety of heart and without any inward repugnance are much more apt to succeed happily—even games of chance where only good luck rules—on joyful days than on days of sadness; I believe that Socrates' Familiar Spirit was nothing else than his following interior inclinations and believing that what he undertook would succeed when he had a secret feeling of gaiety, and would fail when he was sad.

So he exhorted her to make herself happy in the affection that surrounded her, resting in the present, and refusing to think of business save when the courier was ready to depart. He thought it as well she had not the volume of Macchiavelli with her, for the cruelties and perfidies dealt with would but distress her, and he was anxious she should keep her mind on pleasant things. In answer to a suggestion not to ask too much of fortune she replies :—

I am not so used to the favours of fortune as to expect any extraordinary ones; it suffices me when she does not send me too often accidents which would give cause of sadness to the greatest philosopher on earth, and since none such have happened to me during my stay here, where all present objects are agreeable to me and the air of the country suits my constitution fairly well, I find myself in a condition to practise your lessons of gaiety, though I hardly hope for such effects in the conduct of my affairs as you have experienced in games of chance because the luck you have found when you were otherwise disposed to joy probably proceeded from the freedom of all the faculties which ordinarily make for success, but if I were able to dispose of myself I should not rest

so easily on the chance of being in a place where I have found contentment rather than in that whence I came, and for the interests of our House I have long abandoned them to destiny, seeing that prudence itself unless aided by other means must lose its labour. It would need a Genius stronger than that of Socrates to work at it with success, for since it did not enable him to avoid imprisonment and death, it was not much to boast of. I have also observed that the things in which I followed my own impulse have succeeded better than those in which I let myself be guided by the advice of those wiser than myself. But I do not attribute this so much to the felicity of my Genius, but having more concern for the things which affected me than others, I better understood the courses which would injure or advance them than those on whose judgment I relied. If you want me to allow some share to the occult quality of my imagination, I believe you do it to accommodate me to the temper of the people of this country and especially the learned, who are even more pedantic and superstitious than any of those I knew in Holland, because the whole population is so poor that no one studies except to make a living by it. I have had all the trouble in the world to deliver myself from the hands of the physicians, not to suffer from their ignorance—not that I have been ill, only the change of air and diet gave me some whitlows on my fingers; whence these gentlemen opined there must be some evil matter too coarse to be got rid of but by severe measures and bleeding, but feeling myself otherwise so well that I am growing visibly fatter, I opposed obstinacy where reason failed and have taken none of their remedies.

After giving a little more information about the waters of Hornhausen and reverting to Macchiavelli, she goes on:—

This study has not occupied me so much as to trouble me, for I employ the little time that remains to me after the letters I must write and the complaisances I must exchange with my relatives in re-reading your works, in which I profit more in an hour than I should in all my life from other reading. But there is no one here with sense enough to understand them, though I have promised them to the old Duke of Brunswick, who is at Wolfenbüttel, to adorn his library. I doubt if they will much adorn his rheumy old brains, already stuffed with pedantry.

I must not go on with the pleasure of talking to you without remembering that I cannot do it without injuring the human race by wasting the time you would employ in its service with reading the follies of

Your very affectionate friend to serve you,

ELIZABETH.

This 29/19 November.

Elizabeth was a little severe on the pedantry and ignorance of the would-be learned of Berlin, but, according to Guhrauer, the general level of culture there at this time was certainly low. There was not any bookseller established in the town, and the few printing presses which had been set up had not issued a single scientific or serious work. The very name of Descartes was almost unknown until the Princess introduced it, but there were a few with whom she could enjoy the kind of conversation she cared for. Besides Dr. Weiss, to whom she refers in her next letter, there was the learned Professor Knesebeck, who always professed great admiration for her talents; indeed, the accomplished Princess created quite a sensation in Berlin society, which was not accustomed

to see a woman taking part in discussions of problems of philosophy with doctors and divines. No doubt she found a stimulating influence in the company of her cousin the Elector ; he had always been fond of her, and she had considerable influence over him. Years later her sister Sophie remarked : “ He is very docile and E. very free with him.” Not only would he enjoy talks about books and interchange of opinions with her, but would like to talk over with her his scheme, still in embryo, for a university at Duisburg, in Cleves. This did not take shape till some eight or nine years later, but we may trace Elizabeth’s influence in the strongly Cartesian complexion of its scholarship.

In the following February, when her seven months’ leave of absence was up, there was still no talk of her returning before the summer, and she was well content to stay. Her sister Henriette had joined her and had had a severe illness, of which Elizabeth writes :—

My sister Henriette has been so ill we thought we should have lost her. This is what prevented my replying sooner to your last, as I was obliged to be constantly beside her. Since she has been better we have had to follow the Queen Mother of Sweden every day on sleighing parties and in the evenings to banquets and balls, amusements very tiresome to those who would like to devote themselves to better things, but which trouble one less when one can pursue them in company with those whom one has no reason to mistrust. That is why I have more pleasure here than at the Hague. All the same I would rather have employed my time in reading the book by Regius

and your comments upon it. If I do not return to the Hague this coming summer, which I cannot be sure of, though I have not changed my mind, because it depends partly on the will of others and on public affairs, I shall try to have it sent by the vessels which go from Amsterdam to Hamburg, and I hope you will do me the favour to send the latter by the ordinary post. Every time I read your writings I cannot imagine that you can regret printing them, since it is impossible that in the long run they should not be accepted and be valuable to the public. I have lately met with one man here who knew something of them. It was a Doctor of Medicine named Weiss, very learned. He told me that Bacon first made him suspicious of the philosophy of Aristotle, and that your method induced him entirely to reject it, and convinced him of the circulation of the blood which destroys all the ancient principles of medicine, which he confessed he parted with with regret. I have now lent him your *Principia*, and he has promised to tell me his objections : if I find them worth it, I will send them, that you may judge of the capacity of the most sensible among the learned of this place, for he is capable of appreciating your arguments, but I assure you no one is able to esteem you more highly than

Your very affectionate friend.

Finding that she had missed a visit Descartes paid to the Hague before departing for Paris, she had no longer any reason to hasten her return, and was willing to yield to the wishes of her aunt and prolong her stay. She wrote in April :—

I never regretted my absence from the Hague till you told me you had been there, and I felt myself deprived of the pleasure I should have had in your conversation

while you stayed there. It seems to me that the repose I find here amongst those who are fond of me and esteem me much more highly than I deserve surpasses all the good I might find elsewhere, so I can neither promise to return within many months nor to say how many, for I see that the Electress my aunt is not in the mood to let me go, and I would not press it before the return of her son, which, so far as he can see, will not be before September; his affairs may oblige him to come sooner or to delay yet longer. So I may hope but cannot assure myself of the happiness of seeing you about the time you propose returning from France. I hope you may find all the success in this journey which you look for, and if I had not experienced the constancy of your resolutions I should be afraid your friends might induce you to stay there. I beg you to give your address to my sister Sophie that I may have news of you which will be a pleasure to me, however long it may be on the road. After Easter we are going to Krossen, the domain of the Electress on the borders of Silesia for three weeks or a month, where the solitude will give me more leisure for reading, which I shall employ on those books you were so good as to send, for which accept my thanks.

The remainder of the letter is occupied with the annoyance Descartes had endured from Regius, once his favourite pupil, and his difficulties with the Faculty of Theology at Leyden. With regard to his threat of leaving Holland, she gives very sound advice in her next letter :—

It would be unworthy of you to give place to your enemies, and would look as though you had been banished, which would be more prejudice to you than all that the theologians could do. . . . This is the price people pay

for freedom of speech, and the theologians being privileged everywhere have no restraint in a democratic State. Therefore it seems to me you would be right to be content if you obtain that which your friends in Holland advise you to demand, and the resolution you have taken is more becoming a free man sure of his cause. But if you continue that of leaving the country I shall give up mine of returning unless the interests of my House should recall me, and shall rather await here the issue of the treaty of Münster or whatever other conjuncture may bring me back to my country. The domain of the Electress is in a situation which suits my constitution well, two degrees nearer the sun than Berlin, surrounded by the river Oder, and the soil is very fertile. The people there have already recovered the effects of the war better than they have here, though the armies were there longer and there was more damage by fire. In some of the villages there has been such a plague of the flies they call *cousins* that many men and animals have been stifled and rendered deaf and blind; they come in a cloud and go away in the same manner. The inhabitants attribute it to sorcery, but I account for it by the unusual floods from the river, lasting till April, when it was very warm.

Though Guhrauer imagines her to have returned for a time to the Hague, there is no trace of her having seen Descartes again before his departure for Sweden; and in the autumn of 1648 she was still in Berlin and had been suffering from the smallpox, of which she writes to her brother Charles :—

You will have learned by the last post the reason that has hindered my paying my duty to you since I have been persecuted by this wretched illness, and though the

fever has left me and with it the peril of my life, I am still quite covered with it and can use neither my hands nor my eyes. They feed me like a little child, but the doctors would persuade me I shall not be disfigured, which I leave to their faith, having none of my own on the subject ; but at the worst I console myself that the illness will only have the effect of three or four years, at the end of which age would have rendered me ugly enough without its aid. It has not prevented my reading your two letters of the 14 and 22 of September, though I have not been able to read anything else. I will only at this time reply to the last, thanking you humbly for the care you have taken of my little affairs. I am promised by M. Laurens that he will realise and put them on a better footing when they shall be delivered from the hands of the great impostor. I do not know what sort of present would be agreeable to him, nor of what value it ought to be, so I humbly beg you to order it as you think good and pay it out of what may be received of my revenue. You have not sent the power of attorney which I ought to give to whoever you appoint as my receiver, but it is not necessary, since there is no one here who could transcribe it in English, so I send you a blank one signed and sealed.

This letter was written not long before the conclusion of the Treaty, and evidently referred to the little property that should come to Elizabeth. Stipulations had been made for a provision for the Palatinate princesses, but for the most part remained on paper. The whole thing was a great disappointment to the Palatinate family, whose hopes had through long discouragement remained so high, and must have been a strain on the spirits of Elizabeth, weakened with illness as she was. To gain better terms was hopeless,

and Charles Louis, in whom high spirit and prudence were oddly blended, consented to accept his patrimony, clogged though it was with galling conditions. The signing of the Peace of Westphalia in October, 1648, at length opened to him the homeward road.

It must have been with very mixed feelings that the long-looked-for Restoration was received. The Electorate was shorn of its dignity and precedence ; no longer was the Elector Palatine the first in the empire, next the Emperor himself. Only the Rhenish Palatinate was restored ; the Upper Palatinate passed to Bavaria, the Bergstrasse to Mayence, and it was only in the spirit of the homely proverb that half a loaf is better than no bread that the proud young Elector could bring himself to accept so poor an instalment of his rights. That Elizabeth felt the disappointment is to be gathered from a letter of Descartes, in which he applauds the wisdom of Charles Louis in submitting to the inevitable.

That winter fell the unlooked-for blow of the execution of Charles I at the hands of his rebellious subjects. Hopes of his restoration had dwindled to zero as his long captivity grew more and more severe ; but that he should be tried for his life before a tribunal of his own subjects, condemned, and executed came like a thunderclap. The shock to Elizabeth was so great that she became seriously ill ; she wrote from her bed to pour out her horror and distress to her unfailing confidant. In this letter she told him how strangely the exaltation of emotion had wrought with the weakness of her body to inspire her to write poetry, a thing

she had not before attempted. His comment on this curious psychological manifestation is interesting :—

Your Highness tells me of your strong wish to make verses during your malady, and I am thereby reminded of what Plato recounts of Socrates, who, whilst in prison, was pursued by a similar desire. I believe that this inclination for verse proceeds from an agitation of the animal spirits strong enough in weak heads to overturn entirely the whole economy of the imagination, but that in firm and generous natures it merely predisposes towards poetry ; and I hold it a sure sign of a mind stronger and more elevated than those of ordinary mortals. If I did not know in how great a degree your nature rises above others, I should have been seriously alarmed at the effect likely to be produced in you by the conclusion of the tragedies in England ; but I build upon the fact of your Highness being well used to fortune's frowns, and I recognise that the danger of death, whence you have yourself so newly escaped, must diminish in some measure your surprise and horror at the catastrophe of so near a relative. You must necessarily be less struck down by it than if affliction were a stranger to you. . . .

Although the death we speak of, being so violent, may seem at first far worse than that which is met in a man's bed, yet, if all be well considered, in how much is it more glorious and more sweet ! This should console your Highness. It is surely something to die in a way which commands universal pity—to leave the world, praised and mourned by whoever partakes of human sentiments. It is undeniable that without his last trial the gentleness and other virtues of the dead king would never have been so remarked and so esteemed as they will be in future by whoever shall read his history. I am likewise persuaded that in the last hours of his life, his forgiving conscience

caused him far more satisfaction than his indignation (alleged to be the only weakness observable in him) ever caused him pain. As to what regards his mere bodily sufferings, I do not account them as anything, for they are so short that, could assassins use a fever or any of the ills that Nature employs to snatch men from the world, they might with reason be considered much more cruel than when they destroy life with the short sharp blow of an axe. I dare not however prolong my reflections upon this fatal subject, but I will add that at all events it is infinitely better to be completely delivered from every shadow of false hope than to be perpetually and uselessly fostering a delusion.*

Descartes understood well the type of mind with which he had to deal. Some might have felt the letter cold and hard, on too high a plane for comfort, but Elizabeth's soul would lift itself to the contemplation of the higher issues it unfolded, and truly it was written in a prophetic spirit. The nobleness, the courage, the martyr spirit in which the King met his death washed out the remembrance of the errors of his life, the blunders of his administration, and gave him a secure and exalted place upon the roll of honour.

How different was the note in which Elizabeth's sometime friend, Anna van Schurmann, commented on the same event. She was at the Hague at the time, but there is no record of any condolence offered to the Princess. In a letter to her father she touches on the mourning of the Princess of Orange, and adds a cold reflection that it would be a lesson to rulers

* *L'Influence de Cartésianisme*, Foucher de Careil. *Life of the Princess of Bohemia*, Blaze de Bury.

not to tamper with the religious liberty of subjects. It is not to be wondered at that the friendship between her and Elizabeth should have languished ; the wonder rather is that in later days she should have appealed to that ancient friendship and magnanimity, nor found it fail her.

Whether Elizabeth had been at home for a time is not clear, but she must have been in Berlin the following summer, or she could hardly have missed seeing Descartes when he lingered in Holland on his half-reluctant way to Sweden. Probably she returned there when it became apparent that there was to be no joyful family reunion at Heidelberg. More than the mere signing of the Treaty was involved before Charles Louis could take possession of his inheritance ; many minor matters had to be arranged, and it was not until October, 1649, just a year after the conclusion of the Peace, that he set out for the Palatinate, having stopped by the way at Cassel for his betrothal with Charlotte Elizabeth, sister of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, who was already connected with him by marriage, the wife of the latter being Hedwig, sister of Frederic William of Brandenburg, and his mother a granddaughter of William the Silent.

But among the matters to be arranged were none concerning the Queen's return to her old home, which was continually postponed on one excuse or another. First there was the damp and ruinous condition of the interior of the castle—boards rotting, roof letting in the rain, and a lack of funds for the most necessary repairs : the bride even must be housed at first in

the town. Then Frankenthal, the Queen's dowry, though nominally restored, could not be got out of the hands of Spain. Charles wrote anent it two years later :—

Heidelberg, this 3rd of May, 1651.

MADAM,—Secretary Maurice will show your Majesty the K of Spain's power to his Ambassador at Vienna about the delivery of Franckendal, which is subject to several ifs and ands ; so as it is to be feared they only seek, according to their laudable custom, to protract time for to gain another summer. So that I am much confirmed thereby in my belief, that as long as Philipsburg is in the French hands, or the war continues between that crown and Spain, they will not quit Franckendal.
 . . . *

Moreover, there was the impossibility of the Queen leaving the Hague with her debts unpaid, and her son's unwillingness or inability to pay them.

So neither mother, brothers, nor sisters shared his entry into his dominions ; alone he went home, and alone he entered upon his wasted patrimony. Did he remember, or did Elizabeth, the hurried flight from Heidelberg with their grandmother and aunt when they were but babies ? Did either recall the merry games at Leyden when Henry was still at the head of the little band, and they used to pretend they were travelling home to " dear Heidelberg " ? Elizabeth had been Charles's companion sister in those days, and she must have longed to be beside him, but no word survives of her disappointment. Still more

* *Bromley Letters.*

pathetic was that of the Queen, slowly learning that she was to have neither part nor lot in the longed-for restoration. Years before she had said, "My son is more to me than all my daughters." All her efforts, all her ambitions had for years been devoted to setting him in his father's former place, and now to see him there and find he did not want her must have been a bitter cup to drain.

Doubtless there are excuses for him ; with a curtailed patrimony and diminished resources he had to repair the waste of years. He knew his mother to be generous and extravagant ; he felt his first duty was to his country, and until the fatal negotiations with France, which issued in the Orleans War, it must be admitted he well fulfilled it. Later he offered a home to two of his sisters, but for the present, both to his mother and to Elizabeth, who was old enough to remember something of the tragedy of thirty years ago, the situation must have been fraught with bitterness and disappointment.

CHAPTER XI

QUEEN CHRISTINA

Descartes is brought to the notice of the Queen of Sweden by Chanut—He is invited to Stockholm—Idea of interesting her on behalf of the Princess Palatine—Sketch of the young Queen—Descartes writes to Elizabeth about her—His wish to show her Elizabeth's letters to him—Indiscretion of the Queen Mother of Sweden—He goes to Stockholm—Fails to interest the two ladies in each other—His death—Chanut asks again for the letters.

WHILE Elizabeth's philosophy was being thus put to the test by finding how far the reality fell short of the golden hopes built on her brother's restoration, her friend was far away, beyond even the frequent and regular interchange of letters which had been such a solace to her, and occupied with a new interest, a new disciple. During his stay in Paris he had been drawn into an indirect correspondence, through his old friend Chanut, with the brilliant daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, now at eighteen reigning independently over Sweden. Her reputation for learning had won her the title of Pallas Nordica and had spread far beyond her own dominions. Chanut, who was French Ambassador at Stockholm, had already introduced to her notice the writings of Descartes, having read passages aloud to her, and she was so much charmed

with them that she desired to make the personal acquaintance of the writer and to induce him to pay a visit to her Court. Undoubtedly the Philosopher was flattered by her wish, and de Thuillierie, who had preceded Chanut at the French Embassy, painted her talents and accomplishments in very glowing colours. He hesitated, shrinking from the long journey, from the severe climate, and from the gay and distracting life of the Court of a young Queen, but he coquetted with the idea. He wrote to Chanut, enclosing a copy of his *Meditations* for the Queen's acceptance, as he said he had heard of the interest she took in serious studies. He evidently thought it worth while to enlist her on his side in the controversies that had been raging against him amongst the Protestants, for, referring to the accusations of atheism levelled against him in many quarters, he expressed the hope that highly placed persons who had the power might accord him their protection, adding :—

I have heard so much to the credit of this Queen, that although I have often complained of those who would make me acquainted with great people, I cannot but thank you for having commended me to her. I have seen M. de Thuillierie since his return from Sweden, who has described her qualities to such advantage that her being Queen appears to me the least of them ; I could not have believed half had I not seen in that Princess to whom my *Principia Philosophiæ* is dedicated that persons of high birth in either sex need not attain a great age to surpass many men in virtue and erudition. But I fear lest the writings that I send are not worth her stopping to peruse them, and that she will not thank you for making them known to her.

After a dissertation on the subjects of which the book treats, he goes on to testify his 'warm friendship for his correspondent :—

I should be happy could I discuss these matters with you, but I doubt whether I shall ever visit the place where you are, nor that you should return to this country, but I may hope that after some years, in travelling towards France, you would do me the pleasure to stay a few days in my hermitage, and that I shall be able to entertain you with open heart. One may say many things in a short time, and I do not find that frequent meetings are necessary to bind close friendships when they are founded on virtue. From the first hour I had the honour of meeting you, I have been entirely yours, and have ventured ever since to assure myself of your kindness, so I beg you to believe that I could not be more yours than I am, had I passed the whole of my life in your company.*

Elizabeth was much in his thoughts, as this letter shows, not only in the sentence that directly refers to her, but in that about friendship in absence ; and besides the desire he had to make personal acquaintance with the dazzling young lady whose interest in his writings flattered him, he cherished the hope of effecting an introduction between the two and inducing the young Queen to intervene in the counsels at Münster on behalf of the Palatinate family. Personal considerations apart, it was no wild or improbable idea. Christina was the only child and representative of Gustavus Adolphus, who had placed himself at the head of the Protestant interest in Germany and given

* *Descartes, Directeur Spirituel, Victor de Swarte.*

his life to the cause. He had been one of the suitors of the Queen of Bohemia when she was Princess Royal of England, and always retained a warm admiration for her, and was also the personal friend and comrade-in-arms of the unfortunate King. Christina was also connected with the Palatines through her mother, she being sister to the Elector of Brandenburg, George William, their uncle by marriage. Since her widowhood the Queen Dowager had taken up her abode in Berlin, as was mentioned in Elizabeth's letters thence. The young Queen had the credit of interesting herself greatly in the negotiations for putting an end to the Thirty Years' War, and one of her biographers, Professor Bain, attributes to her considerable influence in the cause of peace.* All this pointed to her being a very fit person to forward the restoration of the Palatinate, but though she had written to the son of her father's old ally to promise to do her best for him, she really does not seem to have exerted herself at all on his behalf. The truth was it was the interest of France to prevent the Elector Palatine from regaining the power and prestige of his predecessors and the intrigues of French diplomatists won over Sweden rather to induce the Elector to accept poor terms than to help him to gain better.

In endeavouring to interest Christina personally for the Princess Palatine, Descartes showed himself less of a judge of individual human nature than he was of humanity in the abstract. Learned the young Queen might be, but, inordinately vain and jealous of her

* *Christina Queen of Sweden*, F. W. Bain.

prestige, she would be little likely to view with a favourable eye the pretensions of one whose acquirements were so solid as were those of Elizabeth, still less when they were recommended to her by the encomiums of a distinguished savant whom she wished to regard as devoted to herself. She was delighted to receive the Philosopher at her Court, and lent most flattering attention to his discourse, but Elizabeth's troubles and those of her family she tacitly ignored.

Showy as she was, a brilliant talker when she chose, and of more than average intelligence, she easily blinded such men as Descartes and Chanut to the shallowness of her mind, and the excitable and unbalanced character on which no reliance could be placed. She was much to be pitied: a spoilt child, yet missing a mother's love; the kind of spoiling she had met was that which ministers to vanity. Her sex was a bitter disappointment to her parents, who had naturally set their hearts upon a son to inherit the Swedish crown, and when a little girl—ugly, dark, and hairy—made her unwelcome appearance, her mother turned from her in disgust and handed her over to the care of her aunt and her attendants. Had she made up by lavish fondness for the cold reception the baby found elsewhere, the spoiling would not have been so harmful, but she was a vain, silly woman, highly neurotic and self-centred, and she only woke to a remorseful affection for her daughter when it was too late to gain any influence over that self-willed young woman. From her cradle the child was surrounded with flatterers; she early displayed a pre-

cocious intelligence, cared little for play, solitary child as she was, and nothing at all for dolls, but learned readily whatever was taught her. For this she was praised, and for her daring and audacity. The only reproach she ever met was that she was not a boy, so it was little wonder she tried to make herself as like one as possible. With more reason than most little girls who indulge the idea, she wished herself one, and cared only for boyish sports and games. They called her a "garçon manqué." Her chief playmate was her little cousin, Charles Gustavus, the son of her father's sister; a match was suggested between the two, and they looked upon each other in childhood as little husband and wife. As she grew up, however, marriage did not appeal to Christina; she preferred her independence on a solitary throne, but she always promised her cousin she would marry no one else, and she kept her word, and on her conversion to the Catholic Church abdicated in his favour.*

Her father might have exerted a better influence upon her; but during her early childhood he was absent at the Thirty Years' War, and she was but six when he fell at Lützen, leaving her and the kingdom in the charge of a Council of Regency, well knowing her mother incapable of managing either. The child developed quickly, and was soon ready to take the reins into her own hands. At eighteen she was declared of age, and had been governing for some few years when Descartes made her acquaintance.

The descriptions of her at this time vary widely

* *Princesses et Grandes Dames*, Arvède Barine.

between the enthusiastic eulogiums of Chanut, dazzled by her undoubted brilliancy, as well as by her preference for all things French, and the caustic and sometimes scandalous reports which her wild conduct occasionally gave rise to. It should not, however, be difficult, knowing her later history, and comparing these conflicting accounts, to understand the kind of character she developed. Not without unusual mental gifts, if they were overestimated by her entourage, nor lacking in generous impulses, but vain, jealous, excitable, inheriting not a little of her mother's hysterical temperament, in spite of her masculine proclivities, though capable of understanding affairs of State and forming swift decisions, quite incapable of self-command or of the balanced, well-reasoned judgment needful in such a position as hers.

At eighteen she had grown into a handsome girl, though small and very dark, with a deep voice like a man, which Chanut said could soften with her mood. She cared nothing for dress, even appearing sometimes with dirty hands and torn linen. She took no care of her complexion, despising the protection of either veil or mask—the latter being much worn by ladies in the seventeenth century to preserve the skin from sun or wind. Often she went without any head covering, and seldom wore her hair dressed. “A comb and a ribbon was all the coiffure she employed,” says Chanut in his description of her. For riding she would wear a felt hat with plumes like a man, and affected a mannish taste in dress, preferring a redingote to the laced stomacher worn by women in her day. She rode

divinely, could shoot a running hare with a single ball—and swore like a trooper, says one biographer.* It is not wonderful that she disliked women's society and never felt at ease in it, though she is said to have been kind and considerate to her ladies-in-waiting and generous in gifts, notwithstanding that she could scold roundly on occasion. She would much rather talk with the officers of her army or with her sage and elderly councillors than sit at her embroidery frame with her maids-of-honour round her.

She had been highly educated; she knew eight languages—German, French, Italian, Spanish, Finnish, and Danish, besides Latin, and had begun Greek. She also dabbled in Hebrew and Arabic, and could read them a little. Hitherto she had not studied much philosophy. She was fond of history, and delighted in Tacitus; she was familiar with ancient mythologies, and had even read a good deal in the Fathers, but liked best poetry, either ancient or modern. She had already many eminent men at her Court: Isaac Vossius, who taught her Greek; Salmasius, whose treatise, *De Eruditione Feminarum*, showed his high estimate of women's capacity; Freinsheim, who afterwards went to Heidelberg; Couring, and Bochart the Orientalist.

Some said she loved luxury, but certainly not in the form of eating and drinking, for she drank water and ate but little, and that with reluctance, and slept only five hours at night, taking an hour's rest in the afternoon. She was morbidly fond of talking about herself,

* Arvède Barine.

having been made the centre of attention from her babyhood. She said of herself that she was distrustful and suspicious, ambitious to excess, hot-tempered, proud, impatient, contemptuous, and satirical, and in this she showed a fair knowledge of her own proclivities. The maxims she collected and wrote in a little book show her right-thinking in the main, but they are but commonplace, and had they been written by any but a Queen would hardly have been deemed worth preserving.

Such was the Royal lady between whom and his gentle, philosophic Princess Descartes fondly thought to knit up a friendship. When he passed through the Hague on his journey to France, Elizabeth still lingering in Germany, he wrote to her :—

Not being able to have the honour to receive your commands and pay my respects to you, it seems I must write these lines to assure your Highness that my zeal and devotion to your service will never change, though I change my residence.

After relating how he had received from Chanut a question on which the Queen of Sweden desired his opinion, he goes on :—

The portrait which Chanut draws of the Queen and the discourse he reports have given me such a high esteem for her, that it seems to me you and she would be worthy of each other's conversation ; and since there are so few of the rest of the world who are worthy of it, it would not be unpleasant to your Highness to enter on a close friendship with her, and that besides the contentment of spirit you would find in it, it might be desirable for many reasons.

He proposed that in the letters he wrote to Chanut to be shown to the Queen he might suggest the desirability of this friendship—unless the Princess should forbid it, but to this Elizabeth made no response. There is not a word in her letters to show how this new friendship affected her ; it is rather by what she does not say that we gather an idea that she may have been wounded at finding a rival in his regard, and, with her self-depreciating tendency, have feared to see herself supplanted by a younger, happier, perhaps more brilliant woman. Possibly it was in consequence of a vexation that would not find expression that next month brings news of an attack of illness, for which Descartes prescribes diet and regular exercise, with a reminder that the condition of the mind tells much on that of the body, suggesting that he traced some depression of spirit in her account of bodily illness.

Wise man though he was, he showed masculine tactlessness in praising one woman to another, failing to understand, as men generally do, that jealousy could come in where the relation was one of friendship, not of love. Just there lies one of the fundamental differences of sex ; a man is as jealous as a woman where wife or mistress is concerned : his friend may have many other friends. With a woman it is different. However platonic, however detached her feeling may be, she always wants exclusive prerogative, and when that is threatened she will suffer. But Descartes soon gave his friend another and deeper cause of offence.

In November he wrote that Christina, having heard a discourse at the University of Upsála on the Sovereign Good, was very anxious to learn his views, and had commanded Chanut to request him to send her something on the topic. His treatise *On the Passions*, in which occurred a dissertation on the Sovereign Good, had been in large measure founded on the confidential correspondence he had had with Elizabeth when she, ill and out of spirits, had poured forth unreservedly her griefs and perplexities. His letters, of which apparently he had kept copies, he sent to Chanut for the Queen's perusal, apologising that he could not send those to which they were an answer without the permission of the writer. This permission he was little likely to obtain; the request, indeed, must have cut Elizabeth's reserved soul to the quick. Most women would have reproached him; Elizabeth passed over the matter in dead silence, making no reference to the Queen of Sweden in her reply; and probably Descartes understood her reluctance, though unexpressed, for at his death he left her letters in Chanut's charge with the proviso that he was to suffer them to pass into no other hands.

Her letter of December, 1647, is occupied with the books he had sent her and with an attempt to persuade him to publish a treatise on Erudition which he had long had in contemplation and which they discussed together, and of which she said the world had need. This he refused to produce, fearing to draw down upon him again the enmity of the Schools, for the controversies he had lately been engaged in

in Holland had so worried him and told upon his spirits that he declared, since he could not have the happiness of being in the same place as her Highness, he might as well settle in his own country or in some other place—doubtless Sweden was in his mind's eye. After a delay caused by an injury to her arm, an unskilful surgeon having cut a nerve in bleeding her, Elizabeth responded, thanking him for his generous regret on leaving Holland on her account ; for the benefit of his conversation, she adds,

is the greatest good I look forward to and the only thing that makes me dream of returning there, which the accommodation of affairs in England and the despair of seeing such in Germany might have rendered possible.

In 1648 one of the many abortive treaties was in consideration in England. The tone of this letter shows her to have overcome any resentment she may have felt, but she did not respond to any effort to make her acquainted with the Queen of Sweden, and not unnaturally appeared somewhat hurt at learning incidentally through the indiscretion of the Queen Dowager that her friend was really going to Sweden. It is odd how she avoids the mention of Christina by name. She had learned the news, she writes,

through the mother of the Personage to whom your friend gives your letters. She is not a good person to choose for managing a secret which she can never keep. She performed the rest of her commission with considerable passion.

Twice in this letter Elizabeth refers to "the good woman" in a satirical tone. She ends her letter with the promise of writing again on the subject of his dedication of the French edition of the *Principia*:—

Assuring myself that in changing your abode you will always keep the same charity for your very affectionate friend to serve you,

ELIZABETH.

The visit to Paris proved in many ways a disappointment to Descartes; the war of the Fronde breaking out set everything in confusion, and caused the offered pension to vanish in smoke. It was, said he, like being invited to an entertainment and finding that the servants had struck and the kitchen fire gone out. There was little to be hoped from a sojourn under such distracted conditions, and having visited his estates in Poitou and Brittany, he resolved on returning to Egmont. There fresh and more urgent invitations arrived from Christina, who even sent an admiral to convoy him, but he still hesitated and appeared to shrink from the undertaking.

Christina had, through Chanut, placed before him certain questions on the nature of Love and Hate, and whether natural light sufficed to teach the Love of God; and having read the answers he had sent, professed herself most anxious to discuss these subjects with him in person. She had been studying his books most diligently, Chanut reported; he had himself read much of them aloud to her, and since he could not resolve all her perplexities she had engaged Freinsheim, the learned Professor of Philosophy from

Upsala, to give her regular instruction. She showed a decided faculty for philosophy, and in another letter he said, “ unbent her mind with philosophic discussion after fatiguing it with the affairs of her kingdom.”

All these flattering invitations and the desire of the brilliant young Queen to sit at his feet presently overcame Descartes’ reluctance, and at length, but not until the October of 1649, he departed for Stockholm, where he was to be the guest of his friend Chanut. On his arrival he wrote to Elizabeth to assure her of his devoted service—“ that she might know that no change of air nor of country could diminish either his devotion or his zeal.” He had seen Christina but twice, and said :—

I found that she has no less merit and more virtue than report has credited her with. With the generosity and the majesty which shine in all her actions one sees a gentleness and kindness which make all those who love virtue and have the honour of approaching her, entirely devoted to her service. One of the first things she asked me was if I had news of you, and I did not hesitate to tell her what I thought of your Highness, for remarking the strength of her mind, I had no fear lest it should give her the least jealousy, as I am assured your Highness would not feel on reading the sentiments I have freely expressed about this Queen.

Christina, he said, was devoted to reading, and had collected many ancient books ; she was even interested in Greek, but as she had as yet read nothing of Greek philosophy it was impossible to judge of the taste she might show for it. He goes on :—

In any case the virtue which I observed in this princess makes me always prefer utility in her service to the desire of pleasing her, so that I am not hindered in telling her frankly my opinions, and if they fail to be agreeable to her, which I hardly think, I shall at least have the satisfaction of having done my duty, and have the opportunity of returning all the sooner to my solitude, out of which it is difficult for me to advance in the research of truth ; and that is my principal satisfaction in this life. Monsieur Freinsheim has arranged with her Majesty that I should only go to the castle at the hours when it will please her to give me audience ; thus I shall not have the trouble of paying my court, which accords little with my humour. After all never-the-less though I have so great a veneration for her Majesty, I do not think anything would avail to keep me longer in this country than till next summer ; but I cannot answer for the future. I can only assure you that I remain all my life yours, etc.

This letter appears to have been the last Elizabeth ever received from her friend ; if so, the long silence of the winter must have been very sad to her after the constant correspondence which had cheered her hitherto through her prolonged sojourn in Brandenburg. Did she brood over it, fancying he might be finding a younger, quicker mind more responsive ? There is nothing to tell. His letters had always been her chief solace, and he could hardly have realised how anxiously she looked for them, or he would have written though he had nothing satisfactory to communicate with respect to her affairs. For as regards interesting the Queen on behalf of the Princess Palatine his visit was quite a failure. After the first civil

inquiries for her on his arrival Christina troubled her head no more about Elizabeth, and Descartes' unwillingness to confess his non-success may have kept him silent. Possibly difficulties of communication in winter were too great.

Meanwhile he was not, as Elizabeth may have fancied, greatly enjoying the society of the young Queen. She liked to talk philosophy with him when she had nothing better to do, but she was whimsical and inconsiderate, unaccustomed to think of the convenience of any one but herself, and frequently summoned him to attend her in her cabinet when she first rose, before she entered on the business of the day ; and he who in a far milder climate was used to lying in bed till midday found himself obliged to rise and dress between five and six in the morning and repair to the castle, through the rigours of a Swedish winter, before daylight. He probably found Christina's sharp, though not deep or thoughtful, questions a poor compensation for the quiet morning hours of meditation he always valued so much, and far less stimulating to fruitful thought than the interchange of opinion with Elizabeth he had heretofore found so helpful. The complete derangement of all his old habits seriously shook his health, never very robust, and an attack of pneumonia, probably following influenza—for his host had had an illness with precisely the same symptoms just before—terminated fatally on 11th February, cutting short his days in his fifty-fourth year.

Elizabeth's last letter to him is affectionate and quite unrepachable. She refers in grateful terms to his, announcing his arrival in Sweden :—

It is a proof of the continuance of your kindness to me, which assures me also of the happy success of your journey, since the object was worth the trouble, and you find still more marvels in the Queen of Sweden than her reputation had announced. But it must be confessed you are more capable of discovering them than those who have been till now occupied in proclaiming them. And I seem to know more about her from the little you have told me than by all that I have heard elsewhere. [Is there here a faint touch of sarcasm, or was all this said in good faith ?] Do not believe that so advantageous a description could give me cause for jealousy, but rather that I esteem myself more highly than I did before having the idea of so accomplished a person to free our sex from the imputation of weakness and folly which Messieurs the pedants would fasten upon it. I am quite sure when she has once tasted of your philosophy she will prefer it to their philology. But I marvel that this princess should be able to apply herself to study as she does, and to the affairs of her kingdom also, two occupations so different, each of them demanding the whole mind. The honour which she did me in remembering me in your presence I attribute entirely to her desire to please you in giving you the occasion to exercise the charity you have so often testified, and I owe this advantage, as also the obtaining a share of her approbation, to you, and may preserve it the better as I am unknown to her Majesty except as you have represented me. I feel however capable of a crime against her service in rejoicing that your veneration for her will not detain you long in Sweden. If you leave this winter I hope it may be in the company of M. Kleist, which will afford the opportunity of giving the happiness of seeing you again to your very affectionate friend to serve you,

ELIZABETH.

The answer to this desire of seeing her friend once more came in the dreary month of February from the hand of Chanut :—

February 19, 1650.

A Madame Elizabeth Palatine.

The duty which I herewith tender to your Royal Highness is the very last by which I should have desired to testify my humble respects ; but I think myself obliged to give an account of a person whom you so greatly esteemed for his rare merit, and to inform you, Madame, with incredible grief that we have lost M. Descartes. We were both he and I attacked almost at the same time by a similar malady, a continuous fever with inflammation of the lungs ; but since his fever was in the beginning more internal, he did not believe it dangerous, and would not allow himself to be bled for several days, which rendered the illness so violent that all our trouble and the continual care which the Queen of Sweden took in sending her own physicians could not hinder his decease on the ninth day of his malady. His end was gentle and peaceful, like his life.

Since he did me the honour of residing with me, I have been obliged to take charge of all that he has left, and to have an inventory made of all that was found in his boxes.

In April M. Chanut wrote further, in answer to a request of hers about her letters :—

MADAME,—I obey the order which it has pleased your Royal Highness to give me, and have placed this packet in the hands of the Ambassador of Brandenburg in which I have enclosed all the letters of your Royal Highness that I could find among the papers of the late M. Des-

cartes, as confusedly as they were found, without being touched otherwise than to fold them together more conveniently. It is not that I do not believe, Madame, that in this you are doing an injustice, not only that the relations of this illustrious man would have an interest in retaining some proofs of the honour which he enjoyed in your approbation, but also that some of his private letters should justify to the world that which he has written in the Epistle Dedicatory to his *Principia*; for it may one day happen that, envy being extinct, there will be no more doubt of the foundations of his discoveries in the structure of the world; time and experience will but confirm this doctrine which seems to us so extraordinary; but it will always seem incredible that a person of the age and condition of your Royal Highness should have been the first, and for a long time the only one to comprehend these truths. Therefore, Madame, it seems to me that to clear the memory of my friend from all suspicion of flattery, it would be just that you should permit some of your letters to be seen to serve as a mathematical demonstration of that which he has written in this Epistle; for though they were not studied with the design of displaying the light of your intelligence, they are none the less images all the more naïf that they represent the purity of your reason acting in the search for truth. What makes me think this is that M. Descartes two or three years ago, giving me copies of six letters he had written to your Royal Highness on the subject of the Sovereign Good, told me at the same time that he had others on the same topic which he did not send because they could not be understood without those of your Royal Highness, which he could not communicate without your permission; but he would ask you one day, and I might then offer to read them to the Queen of Sweden, for whom I had particularly desired letters on the subject. I do not doubt that amongst

his papers I might find notes of those which he postponed giving me. These would however be useless, since they depend for their sense on those of your Royal Highness ; instead of which, if we had the suite of what you have thought on this high meditation there would be something to make an acceptable present, if not to the public, at least to the Queen of Sweden, who knows how to value works of such high merit, and seeing virtue without envy, would be much pleased to be confirmed by her own judgment in the singular esteem she has formed for the person of your Royal Highness. We could adjust these rare letters with those which he wrote to me two years ago on the same question of the Sovereign Good, and the two others, equally important, which I proposed to him, her Majesty having thus desired. Your Royal Highness sees that without venturing to beg, I represent weighty reasons to persuade you to give us copies of those letters which particularly concern the Sovereign Good, which could not justly remain private, since they treat of a subject which concerns all men.

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It remains, Madame, that I satisfy your desire of knowing more touching the last days of M. Descartes. The fever mounted to his brain and took from him the understanding of the seriousness of his illness, without otherwise clouding his discourse until the end, so that for the first seven days he did not believe he had the fever. At the end of the seventh, the heat leaving his head and extending throughout his body, he recognised that he had been mistaken and of his own accord had himself bled twice within a few hours, which he had till then refused. But he believed it was already too late, and on the eighth day told me that during the night he had made his account and was resolved to leave the world without grief and with confidence in

the mercy of God. He added some other firm and pious discourse worthy of a man, not only philosophic but religious, who gave us all an example of purity and probity in his life, and who a month before had performed the duties of a true Catholic. We were nevertheless deceived, both he and I, in the estimation of his strength, the end was nearer than we thought: the following night the oppression of his chest increased so as to hinder his breathing. He felt his end approaching without trouble and without fear; and not being able to speak, made signs many times repeated that he departed content with life and with men, and trusting in the goodness of God. I believe, Madame, that had he known the day before, while he could still speak, that his end was so near, he would have commended to me many of his last wishes, and would particularly have desired me to tell your Royal Highness that he died with the same respect he had always held for you during his life, which he had often testified to me in words full of reverence and admiration. And since I know he would have charged me to render for him all the obedience and respect possible, I hold myself engaged more than other men to remain all my life with ardour and affection,

Your Royal Highness's most humble, etc.*

Elizabeth was too human, too much a woman to accede to the request urged upon her in this letter; she could keep silence on what wounded her. She could not give her heart and her confidence to serve as a lesson in philosophy for the Queen of Sweden.

* *Descartes, Directeur Spirituel, Victor de Swarte.*

CHAPTER XII

THE ELDER SISTER

Difficulty of marrying the Palatinate princesses—Louise and Sophie—Proposal from Transylvania for Henriette—The suitor—Henriette sent to Krossen—Charles Louis makes objections—His letter to the Queen—Letters from Elizabeth—Arrangements for the wedding—Elizabeth busy with trousseau and suite—Difficulties and delays—Wedding day fixed—Death of Philip—Postponement—Marriage takes place in May—Henriette's letters to her brother—Her happiness—Her illness and death.

PRETTY, witty, portionless, and backed by no considerable political influence, the four sisters of the Elector Palatine had small opportunity for making desirable alliances. While the family were under the ban of the empire it had been doubly difficult, and it must be owned their mother was far more ardently concerned for the welfare of her sons than for that of her daughters; so when the restoration of the Palatinate came there were the four princesses between the ages of twenty and thirty-two, all attractive—and all unmarried.

The two abortive proposals for Elizabeth were in the far past, and for long there had been no matrimonial project on her behalf; but for the future of her sisters she showed an anxious and motherly con-

cern. She had left girlhood far behind her, and at thirty was a mature woman, self-possessed, dignified, already developing a middle-aged stoutness—she wrote from Berlin to Descartes, “Je m’engraisse visiblement.” She had thought much and suffered much, and had endured considerable ill-health, and her concern now was for others rather than herself. Very unlike her was Louise Hollandine, merry, careless Louise, devoted to her art, yet not so much wrapped up in it as to keep her from indulging in many impossible flirtations, and by her easy manner and foolish indiscretions laying herself open to more than one scandalous report, and unhappily giving a handle to the legends industriously spread by the Protestants after her conversion to the Catholic Church.*

For her a project was entertained, suggested by the English refugees who flocked to the Hague after the murder of the King, of wedding her to the Marquis of Montrose and making him viceroy of Scotland. This remained a castle in the air, and what the two principals felt in the matter does not appear; but Sophie alludes to the plan in her Memoirs with a broad hint that she herself was the attraction, counting Montrose amongst those who “sought their fortune in her service.” But then Sophie was rather apt to make herself the centre of every picture.

For Sophie her mother was ambitious, dreaming of uniting her with Charles II of England, believing firmly in his eventual restoration to his kingdom, and as a Protestant viewing with no disfavour the marriage

* *Memoirer der Herzogin Sophie*, Köcher.

of first cousins. Sophie, however, was shrewd, and very soon perceived the self-interested nature of the regard with which the young King honoured her. They had always been on the best of terms as cousins and playfellows, but one day he joined her walking in the Vorhout, the fashionable promenade, and began to ply her with extravagant compliments, telling her she was handsomer than Mrs. Barlow, for whom his admiration was notorious. Her suspicions were aroused by these overdone compliments, and she soon perceived his object was to get her to obtain a loan for him from Lord Craven. She proceeds :—

I was highly offended, but the Queen, who had noticed his Majesty's marked attentions, was just as much delighted, and blamed me for not going to the promenade on the following evening. I made the excuse of a corn on my foot, which prevented me from walking. My real reason, however, was to avoid the King, having sense enough to know that the marriages of great kings are not made up by such means.

Proposals of a more genuine if of a less brilliant nature were now addressed to the Elector Palatine for the hand of his third sister Henriette, the least distinguished, but the most beautiful of the four, the only one, indeed, entitled to be called absolutely beautiful. Her exquisite fairness and graceful form have been immortalised both by her sister's pen and by the brush of Honthorst in the portrait at Combe Abbey. Though less intellectual than her sisters, her disposition was lovely to match the lovely face : very modest, gentle, and retiring, always anxious to please,

and very sensitive to blame. She had not the talents of the two elder, nor the gay spirits and *aplomb* of the youngest, who came to be described in later years as the best-bred woman in Europe, but she had a tender charm, and was clever in her own chosen pursuits. Never idle, she delighted in doing exquisite needlework or dainty confectionery, and very likely the meagre wardrobes of the sisters were eked out by her skilful fingers. Though timid, she, like the rest, must have been a lively child, for years later, after her early death, when the merry and attractive little daughter of Charles Louis was brought to the Hague to visit her grandmother, the Queen wrote: "Her shape and humour make me think of my poor Henriette."

It is not a little remarkable that so sweet and pretty a creature should have remained so long unwooed, especially considering how much the sisters went into society. A letter of Rupert's, quoted by Miss Scott from the *Rupert Transcripts*, dated 30th September, 1648, refers to Maurice spending a little while at the Hague, occupied in visits of compliment, walking behind his mother and sisters when they were invited to meet distinguished visitors in the gardens of the Prince of Orange; but Henriette was so shy and retiring she may well have been overshadowed and eclipsed by the brilliance of Louise and Sophie, neither of them so beautiful in feature or colouring, but the elder possessing charm and wit, the younger animation and high breeding in no common degree.

It seems in character that it should have been with



HENRIETTE, PRINCESS PALATINE

From a painting by Honthorst at Combe Abbey. By permission of Messrs. Goupil

Henriette's portrait that her suitor from afar fell in love. He was Siegmund Rakoczy, second son of George Rakoczy, Prince of Siebenbürgen in Transylvania, by his second wife, Susanna Lorantfy.* The Rakoczy had won a brilliant position in Eastern Europe during the struggles with the Turks in the earlier part of the century, and George II, elder brother of Siegmund, had pretensions to the Polish throne. Through the marriage of Bethlen Gabor, the old ally of the Winter King, with the sister of George William, Elector of Brandenburg, the two families were already connected, and it was natural the Princess Dowager Susanna should bethink herself of the Palatine princesses when she looked for a fitting match for her younger son. He was now about seven-and-twenty, so Henriette, just four years his junior, seemed the most suitable, and a trusted envoy, George Mednyanski, was despatched to Heidelberg to treat with the newly restored Elector Palatine for the hand of his third sister. No very definite answer was returned, but her portrait was sent to Sarospatak, and if it were the one by Honthorst it is not wonderful that the young man's choice fell upon her. There were others on the *tapis*; a daughter of Count John of Nassau had been suggested, and a nearer neighbour, the heiress of the Voivode of Moldau. Each of these young ladies could bring a dowry in her hand; but in a family council held at Sarospatak, Prince Siegmund empha-

* *Die Heirath der Prinzessin Henriette Marie von der Pfalz*, Anna Wendland. *Neue Heidelberger Jahrbücher*, Jahrgang xiv. Heft 2.

tically declared his preference for the portionless original of the lovely portrait, and mother and elder brother were wise enough to let him have his way.

There was more, however, to be said to it; the Elector Palatine proved somewhat hard to deal with, and the negotiations dragged on for a long time. For many reasons it seemed desirable that these should be conducted through the Electress Dowager of Brandenburg; she had already had much to do with the marriage of Bethlen Gabor with her husband's sister, and she was also extremely fond of her nieces and anxious for their welfare. Moreover, Krossen, on the borders of Silesia, was far more convenient than either Heidelberg or the Hague for the coming and going of despatches. Elizabeth was still with her, so in the summer of 1650 Henriette was sent to her care.

The Elector, however, was not disposed to let his aunt and sister have a free hand in the matter; his ambition was unsatisfied, and though not willing to break it off altogether, he did not wish to proceed definitely. In September he wrote to his mother:—

* By the former post I sent to Maurice a copy for your Majesty's use of what I sent to the Electress concerning the Transylvanian business; if it can be brought higher, it will be so much the better. The Ambassador that is here and pretended to treat with me about it, though he have no sufficient power, I have with a civil answer of neither aye nor no, referred to the Electress to whom

* *Briefe der Kinder des Winterkönigs*, Haucke. *Heidelberger Jahrbücher*.

his communication is directed (having only brought me letters of credence from the Prince regnant (George) and his mother), as also your Majesty's consent. But for my part I like the other match proposed to her much better, though this will be more profitable for her for matter of money. I have written to Vienna to inform myself how things stand with him, and whether the Emperor gives him the title of Prince, which he pretends, because (as the Ambassador says) the Principality is by the State entailed upon the family.

This other match is unmentioned either in Frau Wendland's article or in that by Mrs. Green on the Queen of Bohemia; it must have been rather in the clouds. The Queen seems to have made no objection to Prince Siegmund, though Elizabeth had written :—

All my fear is lest the Queen, when all is done, will not consent out of crossness, and there is none but the Electress can hinder this.

In the midst of all the discussions stood the poor little bride, whose feelings in the matter, according to the custom of the day, were consulted by no one, though her aunt wrote tenderly of her in describing to Charles the reception of the envoy from Siebenbürgen :—

I wish your Highness could have seen the dearest niece when her name was mentioned, turning pale and the tears coming into her eyes.

Elizabeth more cheerfully assures him that if Henriette had sensible people about her who would keep her from despair or from losing her courage—

“as you know is her habit,” she adds—she is sure she would be willing to do whatever would be of service to her brother the Elector. Henriette sends a pathetic little message to the same effect in her sister’s letter :—

If she sacrifices herself for her relations, she feels sure they will be too kind to abandon her, should she have need of them. These words were accompanied with such torrents of tears that they made me pity her.

Nevertheless the tears did not weigh with any one as a reason for breaking off the match, dearly as they all loved her. Her brother’s objections were more concerned with the question of the princely rank of the suitor and whether his wealth were sufficient to ensure the dowry and dignity of his widow should she survive him ; while to the Electress and her son—who himself came to Cölln on the Spree to receive the envoy with due honour—the proposals seemed quite acceptable. The latter wrote :—

Since the conditions appear so favourable I do not hesitate to recommend it to your Highness’s best consideration, and I must say if it were not so far off it would be in my opinion an excellent thing.

Elizabeth’s own letters to her brother on the subject are so characteristic that, though somewhat lengthy, they are well worth quoting. In the first she meets his objections very fully and fairly :—

The two things which you urge against the Transylvanian marriage are that he is not esteemed a prince,

and that one must trust to his honesty to observe the conditions. For the first we have the testimony of all those who have served in the Swedish army, of Comenius, and now of Courland, which I send you herewith, and I think the authority is quite as good as that of Lesley. One may well believe that in a Court where they try to lower the Palatinate House they do not want it to make good alliances. Besides, the Ambassadors of the Prince of Transylvania would not have ventured to give a false title to his brother if it did not belong to him, and we have the original of that which they sent you written in their own hand. On the second point I do not think you can bring forward a single instance of a marriage where the dowry was advanced before the death of the husband, and if one believes one is dealing with people without honesty one should not give them a daughter. . . .

If the Elector Palatine did not wish the said marriage he should have informed his relations here, who could have refused with a better grace than by demanding conditions quite unheard of. . . . It was necessary to say yes or no, for the distance is not so small as to admit of many journeys to and fro. For the equipment we should soon complete it if we only had the money or if your Highness would give us credit for what is necessary for linen, clothes and liveries. The horses I believe the Elector of Brandenburg will give them, the Queen of Bohemia gives her coach, and that of the ladies-in-waiting will only cost 150 Rd. (rix-dollars). We do not ask more than you would judge necessary, but 1000 fl. is as good as nothing; the wedding dress will cost more than that, without reckoning that of the bridesmaids. If you would rather pay the rest in three years we might be able to obtain credit till then, and she assures me she will not press for more if only she may be furnished with a trousseau that will not put her nor her relations to shame, that she may be respected

from the start; and she begs to send humble thanks to her papa for the care he has had for her, but since the thing has gone so far she cannot draw back with dignity, and hopes he will continue his kindness in the way mentioned. She would write herself but is so melancholy she cannot.

I forgot to tell you that I have not shown what you said about the full power to the Electress, knowing that it would vex her. One should not cavil at a thing done, but try to draw all the advantage possible from it.

It will be observed that the younger princesses called their eldest brother Papa; and Henriette's own little submissive and ill-spelt letter, written when she thought he wished her to accept her suitor, is addressed to "the highly honoured Elector and gracious Herr Vater." Expressing her willingness to do whatever he judged best for the family, she adds: "It seems rather too far away to be pleasant, and though I might have a little more money by it I do not love myself so much that for the sake of that I would go so far from all my relations; besides, I am used to doing with a little." It seemed hard on her that when, to please others, she had brought her mind to it and got reconciled to the idea she should be called upon to draw back, and she was afraid if she did so it would be thought she had been in such a hurry to be married as to catch at the first opportunity. A great fuss had been made as to whether she should be allowed to accept a watch set round with diamonds which the envoy had brought from the suitor; Mednyanski declared he could not take it back, so she was permitted to keep it "not as a

wedding gift, but a friendly offering." A little later Prince Siegmund ventured to address a letter to his intended bride, conveying something of the warmth of the sentiment inspired by her portrait :—

I envy the fate of this letter, which will see your charming countenance sooner than I shall; though there are no words which would translate my feelings fully, I comfort myself that this will be the interpreter of my love.

In December Elizabeth writes, in reply to an invitation to Heidelberg, rather quaintly in the third person, as she sometimes did :—

The Elector Palatine does Elizabeth too much honour in thinking of offering her a lodging which would be too good for her, and she will try to repair thither as soon as possible, but she cannot yet make an assignation with my lord . . . while the Electress is so out of temper with him she dares not propose the journey, but his last letter has somewhat softened her. . . . I only wish Princess Catherine were a hundredth part as reasonable, but she is governed by her feelings and I cannot bear to hear her fulminate against the Elector Palatine. She rages merely from the part of his letter the Electress showed her.

Much of this letter and of the two following recapitulate the arguments in favour of the Prince she had already urged. On Christmas Eve she writes :—

We have received no letters from you this week, the post from Leipsic not having arrived when that from Berlin went out. The roads are so bad now that the frost has broken that they are almost impassable. I believe

that is what hinders the Elector of Br from coming here. Nevertheless I have written to Prussia for horses, and so soon as I can learn when they will be here I will give an assignation to my lord. The Elector has promised some to Princess Henriette, but they will be of a different breed and price to mine.

I believe a copy of the paper the man brought from Hungary to be signed has already been sent you, but not having heard you have received it, I send it herewith, together with a panegyric, by which you will see the titles the princes enjoyed in the lifetime of their father. If it is too large for this packet I will send part next week ; I stole it from a Frankfort professor, who has asked to have it back. The Duke of Courland by the last post assured me again that the title given to Prince Siegmund is that which is accorded him by every one. There is a man here who spent six weeks with him in a castle in which he is now living apart from his mother—I have forgotten the name. He keeps always two hundred men-at-arms and fifty gentlemen in his suite, and his household is served on vessels of silver ; this man also spoke of the number of strong fortresses he owns independently. I will tell you more particulars another time because I have not yet spoken with him myself, but I have it on the word of a man in whom I place every confidence and see his words confirmed on every side. There was in the neighbourhood the funeral of the wife of the Baron de Brumnitz, Governor of Lusitania, to which the Electress sent one of her people to represent her. He told me that in this assembly, which was very great, the marriage was spoken of and every one considered it very advantageous and by the Silesians from the frontier he was considered the richest and most desirable match that could be found amongst the Protestants (Evangelicals).

Poor Elizabeth found herself between hammer and anvil, the aunts, to whom she felt so much gratitude was owing, being very angry at the threatened frustration of their kind efforts, and her brother accusing her and them of meddling and precipitation. She writes much hurt :—

If you had told me not to meddle in the matter I would have obeyed you gladly, for it is not my humour to push myself into affairs; I am too used to being charged with the faults of others in such business to seek it, but not having your orders for an excuse I could not oppose myself to the desire of the Electress that I should be present at all that was done—but enough of this matter.

A fortnight later she says :—

The reason I did not answer you last week was that your example showed me the wrong one may do by writing in a passion, and one must be more apathetic than a stoic to receive such cruel reproaches from the person one loves best in the world without an extreme perturbation. Still my sense of what you do to me is not so great and afflicts me much less than the harm you do yourself by your passions, and if you do not accustom yourself to control them or at least not to make decisions while they possess you, I foresee that you will not only lose success but health of body and mind. Consider, I beg you, that all those who have maintained or advanced their interests by conduct and not force of arms have been people of moderate passions, the Duke of Bavaria, old William (the Silent) and Prince Henry (of Orange), the Count de Schwartzenberg and numbers of others, while on the contrary those whom they ruined were the slaves of their passions or those of others. For my own part I

would not only willingly bear the imputation of all your faults and past misfortunes, but make the journey to Heidelberg to take upon me those you have or may have in the future if that could ease your mind, but whilst I am here there is no means of verifying your accusations touching the marriage, since all who have assisted know my innocence. My only fault has been to speak the bare truth as I learned it, and it is with regret that I will correct myself, but I will do it from the respect I owe you. My former letters have amply answered the things you accused me of, so I will not weary you with a repetition, but only beg you to read them over in cold blood, and you will see I could not have acted otherwise. . . . I have not shown your letter to the Electress for fear of vexing her, believing that you did not intend to reproach her, but only me.

The objections of Charles Louis were at last overcome, and the wedding was fixed for 25th March, 1651. Contrary to her daughter's expectations, the Queen of Bohemia signed the contract without any difficulty ; to her, remembering the old alliance with Bethlen Gabor, his visits to Prague and his standing godfather to Rupert, it did not seem so outlandish as to her son, and her accompanying letter referred to the ancient friendship. The matter once made sure, Elizabeth could go forward with preparations, and she busied herself with motherly care in seeing that her young sister was duly provided with all things fitting her station—servants, horses, carriages, outfit ; and for all these necessities money was hard to obtain, for the Elector Palatine had but little and parted unwillingly with that little ; while the bride's mother

had at this time hardly bread to put into her mouth and had completely exhausted her credit at the Hague ; but for the generosity of her aunt and cousin Henriette must have gone almost as a beggarmaid to her husband. Elizabeth herself did as much as she could, though her own means were but small, and the provision promised the princesses at the Peace of Westphalia was not forthcoming. She managed all as economically as possible, seeking out the cheapest markets ; lace she ordered from Holland, where it cost less than in Germany ; silver passementerie for the wedding gown and gold lace for the liveries she asked the Elector Palatine to procure from Frankfort-am-Main, where it could be had cheap. She was continually obliged to make representations to him of the necessities of the case. She had to remind him that though a coach and six would be furnished by the bridegroom to transport the bride, nothing had been provided for the suite :—

for whom your Highness's ministers have omitted to order anything, believing apparently that they are so light they can travel upon wings. . . . Your daughter says that if your Highness would give her a little something that she may appear among strangers without shame, she hopes not to be obliged to importune you any more, and she will repay it at a future time, for if she had sufficient without she would never be any expense to her family.

Something was sent, but the trousseau, after all, was but meagre ; the bride seems to have had but six nightgowns and a dozen chemises, two dozen pocket-handkerchiefs in a bag, and a few other little things,

including embroidered cravats. Besides the wedding dress with a train, there were only three other gowns and a "trägerlin" to wear in the morning, probably a species of teagown. For the bridesmaids who were to carry her train dresses of silver *moiré* were provided, and a black satin for the Mistress of the Robes. Two silver candelabra were ordered, with a silver hand-basin and ewer, these being counted by Elizabeth as amongst "barest necessities." A list of needful attendants was drawn up:—

A Chamberlain over the household, with three servants for himself.

Two Ushers, with each one servant.

A Court Preacher, with a servant.

A Physician, with a servant.

A Secretary, with a servant.

Two Pages.

Two Lacqueys.

A Tailor.

Four Coachmen.

Two Footmen.

A Groom.

A Cook, with two underlings.

A Mistress of the Robes, with a maid.

Four Maids-of-Honour, with two maids.

Two Princely Ladies' Maids.

A Sewing Maid.

Two Laundresses.

The Chamberlain was to be permitted four horses, the Ushers two each, and it was agreed the household might be either German or English. The former was

an important functionary, and the choice exercised Elizabeth considerably. She thought he should be old, but was obliged to content herself with one recommended by the Electress, who was but thirty-four and looked younger, because he had a competent knowledge of languages and was acquainted with the country, besides knowing the world.

Preparations were advanced and the date for the wedding drawing near when a fresh delay arose. News came that Philip, who, his undertaking for the Venetian Republic having come to naught, was fighting for Spain, had fallen at the siege of Rethel on 16th February. This was a great grief, and to none more than to the two sisters at Krossen. He was nearest in age to Henriette, sharing her nursery recollections, and his eldest sister loved him tenderly, all the more for having espoused his cause when he was in trouble and suffered on his behalf. Charles Louis also felt his death keenly, as may be gathered from his aunt Catherine's letter of condolence, she having put aside her indignation and written to him as head of the family on the sad occasion. It should have drawn them all together; but it did not, however, prevent his sending more reproaches, which vexed Elizabeth, for in writing of Philip's death she refers to the continued anger of kk (the Elector) against the innocent BB (herself). Resuming her letter next day, she adds :—

I wrote the accompanying last night and afterwards fell asleep again for some time, having had no sleep for several days, for the image of my dear brother Philip was

continually before my eyes. On waking I found the two despatches of the 5th and 13th January together on my bed, which caused me fresh emotion by the narrative of his death which prevents me now answering the said letters, though one part has been answered in advance.

She goes on with some explanations not very clear to the reader, who does not know to what they refer, and then, suddenly dropping into English from the French in which the greater part of the letter was written, says :—

If you would prefer that this should come from others rather than yourself, you need give but the least hint of it and your will shall be fulfilled, and do not put yourself into passion to vex you and your friends, both have affliction enough. . . .

I hope that for my brother's sake you will keep his tall page named Craven in attendance on you. He has served his master well and his family are in need. The Electress wants to have the body of Prince Philip brought to Sedan.

At length all hindrances were overcome, and the marriage ceremony was to take place. The Elector Palatine could not be present, but intended sending his brother Edward, who was with him at Heidelberg, to represent him ; this, however, was given up on the score of expense. The Electress Dowager spared no pains to make the occasion a brilliant one, and was warmly seconded by her son Frederic William, who sent a guard of honour to conduct "our dear and well-beloved cousin, Princess Henriette," to Siebenbürgen. This was considered a special mark of favour, as his

mother took care to inform the Elector Palatine. Some anxiety seems to have been felt lest his wedding gift and the money the latter had promised should not arrive in time ; but by 3rd May they had come, and Henriette wrote him a most grateful letter of thanks for both presents and congratulations, and eagerly assures him he need send her nothing more—she is abundantly content. She followed up this letter by another within a few days, fearing lest she had not expressed herself with sufficient deference and gratitude.

On the evening of the 13th the proxy for the Prince, Franz Rhedey, accompanied by George Mednyanski and Michael Esterhazy, with many other noblemen, arrived ; three musicians and two cooks were in their train, but the wedding feast was provided by the Elector of Brandenburg. On the 14th the religious ceremony took place, and on the next afternoon wedding gifts were presented—“costly trifles, pearls, chains and princely garments.” So Henriette had her wish of appearing suitably adorned and unashamed when she should be handed over to her bridegroom. The last act was the signing of her resignation of all claims on the Palatinate during the lifetime of her brothers and their heirs. This document, having to be gone through in Latin and then in German, took time, and the evening was concluded by Hungarian singing and dancing. Next day a service with a farewell sermon was held in the church, and it was not until the 17th that the bridal train departed, travelling by Breslau.

On the route Henriette wrote to her brother in her usual dutiful strain, apologising for having been unable to do so from Krossen since the wedding. Their rate of progress was slow, but she found her new servants most attentive to her every need, and declares that the nation who had been described to her as barbarous showed her every imaginable civility. Yet she must have felt very lonely, having parted with her beloved sister and aunt, and not yet met her stranger husband. It was no wonder she shrank and cried at the prospect ; the wonder was that she now went to meet her fate with so much calm and cheerfulness.

And the issue befuddled her fears and transcended her hopes. She found a devoted lover in her young husband, and both he and his mother fell at once under the spell of her charm and sweetness ; it seemed they could not make enough of her nor sufficiently testify their pleasure in her. How fain would we read the intimate confidential letters she must have penned to her aunt and the sister who had been like a mother to her. These unhappily have not survived, though some of those to her brother have been preserved. That there were such we know, as the Electress occasionally quotes from them in writing to her nephew such details as would gratify his pride : that Prince Siegmund was very stately, and drives always with six horses. The Princess sent the following description of her reception to her " gracious Herr Father " :—

I cannot miss the opportunity of the return of your Highness's messenger without expressing my humble

thanks for all your kindness. Would to God I could for once be so happy as to be able to repay it with my humble service, and express the gratefulness of my heart. Because your Highness has bidden me to give an account of my position here I must say that both the Frau Mother and the reigning Princess (the wife of the elder brother, George II) have greatly caressed me, as the former still does, and my lord is very good to me and sees that I have nothing to complain of except being so far from all my relations. I wish I could have been so happy yesterday, that your Highness might have seen me in my Hungarian dress ; I looked so pretty in it, my lord's mother could not express how delighted she was. Yet it is not at all a splendid dress, but quite bürgerlich, and all the women have one like the peasants, which would not please your Highness, but the men are very fine and mostly very courteous people, amongst whom my lord is not the least well bred, as some had said and written of him. I wish my lord could be so happy as to be known to your Highness, for I feel sure you would like your brother-in-law, and would see that people had spoken more lies than truth in their reports to your Highness. Forgive me that I keep you so long with my chatter, and let me continue to enjoy your gracious affection.

To know her so happy and appreciated in her new home must have been a solace to the hearts that loved her and missed her, but their joy was brief. Within three months came news of her illness ; she had been seized with fever, which did not at the first seem dangerous. She was to go with her husband to meet Prince George and his wife at Tasnad, and it was hoped the change of air would restore her ; but as she grew worse the Princess Dowager hastened to

take her back to Sarospatak. One more little letter she wrote to her brother to assure him how tenderly careful of her were both her husband and his mother, and again she expressed her earnest desire that he might meet her husband :—

“ I find no fault in him,” she writes, “ but that he loves me too much. . . . I am so weary,” the letter ends, “ that I can scarcely support myself upon my legs, and must beg leave to end this.”

Two days later she attempted another letter, left unfinished. Soon she was too weak to hold a pen, and visits to health resorts were not only unavailing, but wasted her waning strength. On 18th September, between eight and nine in the morning, her gentle life closed with a peaceful death.

Her young husband was stricken down by the blow. A month later he wrote : “ I hold my life for nothing worth.” He only survived her a few months. After roaming restlessly, heartbroken, from place to place, he died of fever 4th February, 1652.

CHAPTER XIII

HEIDELBERG ONCE MORE

Elizabeth returns to her old home—State of the town and castle—
—Sophie and Edward find her altered—State visit to Stuttgart
—Restoration of the University—Learned men in Heidelberg—
The Diet at Ratisbon—Character of the young Electress Palatine
—Her jealousy—She confides in Elizabeth—Elizabeth's letters
to her brother—Rupert returns—Death of Maurice—Quarrels
of the brothers—The divorce—Elizabeth departs for Cassel.

MORE than thirty years had passed away since Elizabeth, then a baby of two years old, had been carried in haste along the Bergstrasse by way of Darmstadt and Frankfort to Berlin, and at length, a saddened woman of middle age, she found herself travelling back by the same road. Did any recollection linger of that hurried flight, or of the castle rising stately on the wooded hill above the river when after so long a time she came in sight of it? The changes had been terrible in the interval, but were already being repaired; new houses were rising and ruins cleared away, but still there were grass-grown lanes where once there had been streets; woods had been cut down and burnt, and much of the castle was still ruinous. Repairs, however, were in progress; towers had been rebuilt, walls and roofs made whole and

sound, but for the exquisite decorations of former days there was now no money. On his first return the Elector Palatine had been forced to take up his abode in a house in the town known as the Commissariat House ; thither he had brought his bride, and there a year later his sister Sophie had joined them ; but by the time of Elizabeth's visit it appears they had removed and occupied that part of the castle that had been made habitable, though the courtyard could hardly yet have assumed the distinguished appearance shown in the print of 1680.

Elizabeth found two brothers and a sister to welcome her, for Sophie, always her eldest brother's pet and plaything, and growing more and more into his companion and confidante, had been summoned to Heidelberg so soon as he was established, and they had been lately joined by Edward from Paris. The invitation of the preceding winter, sent when Elizabeth was at Krossen, and just then too much occupied with the arrangements for Henriette's marriage to leave, had been repeated by Sophie's hand at her brother's wish, and now, the wedding over and her young sister gone to her distant home, she was no doubt glad to avail herself of the invitation. Sophie writes in her Memoirs :—

I wrote for my sister Elizabeth, whom the Elector had always greatly esteemed, and at my request she consented to undertake the journey. Before doing so however, she had made up the marriage of our sister Princess Henriette and Prince Rakoczy, at which the Elector was displeased, thinking it a mistake to send our sister so far for so poor an alliance.



HEIDELBERG CASTLE AFTER THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR
from an old print

Princess Elizabeth arrived at Heidelberg while our brother, Prince Edward, was there. He had awaited her arrival with great impatience, as it was long since they had met. Her stay at the Court of our aunt, the Electress of Brandenburg, had done her no good. We thought her much changed, both in mind and person. Looking at her, Prince Edward whispered to me: "Where has her liveliness gone? What has become of her apt tongue?" (*Qu'a t'elle fait avec sa belle bouche?*) The Electress also thought her disagreeable; and the Elector, who still bore her a grudge for the marriage of our sister Henriette, was infected with his wife's dislike. The Electress made much of me from dislike of my sister, and Elizabeth at once asserted such authority over me that I began to prefer Madame, who could be charming when she pleased; for at times she had some very gracious moments, by which I benefited. Still I was greatly to blame for not submitting to a sister who had evidently much more sense than myself. (She was twelve years Sophie's senior.) My friends on the other hand were well pleased to foster my ill-humour in order to draw me closer to themselves.

It is easy to understand the unfavourable impression made by Elizabeth. Sensitive to every shade of dislike or misunderstanding, yet too reserved to give any expression to hurt feeling, save by silence and an aloofness of manner to which in uncongenial society she was always prone, feeling the contrast between the clinging, submissive affectionateness of the young sister from whom she had just parted and the pert criticisms of the one she had newly rejoined, her coldness and low spirits would but increase her isolation. How could she be joyful when she had but just

come through such heavy sorrows ? It was but three months since her much-loved brother Philip had lost his young life at the siege of Rethel, and almost at the same time she had learned of the death of her closest friend, whose influence and advice had been her support through so many troubles. Of this loss she seems never to have spoken, but with this mourning in her heart how could she make merry and bear her part in the frivolous amusements of the Electress Charlotte's Court, never at any time much to her taste, and now quite out of tune with her feelings ?

In the course of that year she had to accompany the Electoral family in a state visit paid to the Duke of Würtemberg at Stuttgardt, of which Sophie gives a lively account :—

We were received outside the gates with great pomp by the Duke and all his Court. My uncle, the Duke of Simmern (Philip Louis, her father's brother), was there with his sons ; also the Margrave of Baden Durlach, and a young prince of Holstein. The number of princesses too was very great, consisting of the Duchess of Würtemberg with her daughters and two sisters-in-law, the Princesses Antonia and Anna Johanna, and two cousins, the Princesses Faustine and Floriane. The number of counts, countesses, and other nobility also present was beyond computation.

The procession on our arrival was so enormous that the Duke took a fancy to make it pass several times through the streets ; and we were tired not only by this, but also by a large and very lengthy supper-party which lasted till midnight. That however did not prevent our hosts from waking us early next morning to go hunting ;

but just as we were nearly ready they remembered that the hunt might perhaps not be advisable after the fatigues of our journey, and it was accordingly given up. As compensation for the disappointment, we remained nearly the whole day long at table, the men vying with each other who should drink most, while the old princesses opened cray-fish for us. The remainder of our time at Stuttgart was spent in balls, concerts, wirthschaft (a species of mumming,* a favourite entertainment at that day), hunting (which Elizabeth and Sophie both hated), and walking. It was all very magnificent, but seasoned with little politeness, and therefore not at all to my taste. The gentlemen kept apart from the ladies, who were all very solemn.

This last feature would be little to the taste of the admiration-loving Sophie, and still less would the whole function, in which the more barbarous side of German manners was displayed, accord with the humour of Elizabeth, accustomed as she was to intellectual society and the conversation of clever men. Moreover, besides the sore heart she must have carried to the festivity with two sad losses fresh in her always constant mind, about this time she must have learned with grief of the death of her young sister after but a few months of marriage. She, we may be sure, would not have been so easily distracted from her mourning as was her sister-in-law, who received the news of her mother's death during this visit and was diverted by Sophie, who writes in her Memoirs :—

* Something between a masquerade and a fancy fair, *Sophie Duchess of Hanover*, by A. W. Warde.

The Duke of Holstein had a gentleman with him who bowed every time he caught my eye. I made the Electress laugh at this in order to console her for her mother's death, the news of which having just arrived brought our visit to a close, by no means to my regret.

None of them would regret the return to Heidelberg, with its many interests and reviving intellectual life. Charles Louis was just turning his attention to the re-establishment of the University, a scheme most congenial to his eldest sister, and one in which her excellent sense and scholarship could be of real service. Her high reputation would be an additional inducement to the men of learning whom he was inviting to take up their residence in Heidelberg and fill the newly created Chairs, and trying to attract by every promise, not only of complete religious toleration in their own practice, but a free hand in their teaching.

Professor von Spina, who had saved the archives in the sack of the Bibliotheca Palatina, had returned and was lending his aid. At first only seven Chairs were endowed, but the Elector succeeded in filling them all with men of renown. Blomius was invited from Hamburg, and the great Samuel Puffendorf; Freinsheim, who had been in Sweden and there enjoyed the acquaintance of Descartes; the Orientalist Hottinger from Zürich; Tossanus, Heinrich David, Chuno, and Jakob Israel. The Librarian was Ezekiel Spanheim, and he was despatched by the Elector Palatine to Rome to endeavour to negotiate for the return of the books and MSS. Altogether a distinguished company.

The reopening of the University took place in the Aula on 1st November, 1651, whence the Elector and the new professors went in procession to the Church of the Holy Ghost, where a solemn inaugural service was held, and afterwards a great banquet was given in the castle. Elizabeth's name is not mentioned in connection with these proceedings, but it is recorded of her, on the authority of Guhrauer, that she took an active part in the dissemination of the Cartesian philosophy in Heidelberg and had great discussions of his doctrines with the learned men assembled there, and we may well believe this function would be very much more congenial to her than the wearisome feasting at Stuttgart. With Freinsheim she must have deeply enjoyed speaking of her old friend Descartes, and hearing all that he could tell of the last months of the philosopher's life.

In the autumn of the next year the Elector Palatine was summoned to meet the Emperor Ferdinand III at Prague, and on the White Mountain, where his father had been defeated, was received with such distinguished honour that it was said that he had gained there more advantage than his father had lost. If this were a hyperbole, at least the interview was highly satisfactory and showed that the Elector Palatine had established himself in a secure position, and this was recognised at the ensuing Diet at Ratisbon. The Electress Charlotte was so much annoyed that her husband could not take her with him to Prague that he, being still much enamoured and anxious to please her, promised that she and his two sisters

should accompany him to the Diet. This resolution was strongly disapproved by Sophie, much as she always liked being with him and seeing him honoured. She wrote in her Memoirs :—

I saw that his jealousy on the one side and Madame's affectations and conceit on the other could not fail to produce a bad effect in so crowded an assemblage. However the Elector's desire always to have his beloved wife by his side caused us to undertake the journey in the middle of winter, attended by a large retinue. We made our solemn entry into Ratisbon, escorted by numerous foot and horse guards, to the sound of trumpet and kettle-drum. That evening the Emperor and Empress sent to welcome us, and after a few days' rest the Elector had an audience of the Emperor, and the Electress of the Empress, who did her the honour to cross several ante-chambers to receive her at the head of the staircase, giving us her hand in German fashion. We followed her to the state-room, where she seated herself in an armchair under a canopy. Opposite to her was placed an armchair for the Electress, and high-backed chairs for my sister and myself.

The importance of this attention paid to the family of the Elector Palatine was considerable, since there was great significance in the assignment of fauteuils or tabourets on occasions of ceremony, and the rank of the two princesses was acknowledged by the high-backed chairs. The memoir goes on :—

The next day her Majesty honoured the Electress by returning this first visit, and was received at the carriage door and reconducted to it by the Electress. On later

occasions when we went to pay our respects Court etiquette was relaxed, and her Majesty made us play cards with her. The Emperor also entertained us with an Opera, a Carnival and a Wirthschaft, in which their Majesties acted as host and hostess. Every one was splendidly dressed, but the dancing was like that of German peasants.

Elizabeth's own account of these junketings in a letter to her cousin Elizabeth Louise, Abbess of Herford, shows her in a new light :—

Next week (my brother) will answer your letter, for just now it is Carnival and no one has time to do anything and little enough to write. I have already danced my feet to bits, such a rushing about as I never saw in my life. I never left the dancing room, but went from one partner to another till we left. There was a peasant's wedding at the Fürstenbergs, a Wirthschaft given by the Emperor, an entertainment at Count Curtz's with a stately comedy after the Italian manner, which must have cost 20 thousand thalers.

Her correspondence with her cousin from Ratisbon was frequent, for under the new constitution of the Reichstag, brought about by the Peace of Westphalia, the question of the representation of Herford seemed a little uncertain, and Elizabeth was anxious that her brother the Elector should represent the Abbess, who had a voice but not a personal seat in the deliberations of the empire. She wrote at the beginning of the sittings :—

I received your letter of the 14th two days ago and will observe your commands with diligence, and perhaps be-

fore this letter is finished shall be able to let you know what the completed protectorate is worth. The Chancellor Bohn is here and also Dr. Bosching as deputy for the town of Speyer, but I have not yet been able to learn where he lodges as I only got your letter in the evening of the day before yesterday, and yesterday was Sunday and her Majesty the Empress spent all the afternoon with us, so that I could do nothing. I sent to-day but have not yet got an answer. I think, however, that the said doctor cannot well represent your Grace in the Council of Princes, as he belongs to the Town Council, which often holds its sittings at the same time as the Princes, and he cannot be in two places at once. But if you would give your voice to my brother you would suffer no prejudice, and what was for your interest would be forwarded with more force, because he is himself on the spot and would have more weight with the other representatives than a mere doctor. . . . It would also show the Herforders and others with whom you have to do that you are supported by the Head of your Family.

At this time Elizabeth had not yet realised how much the question would come to concern her personally.

The Electress, who had been so eager for the visit for the sake of displaying her beauty before the large concourse gathered at Ratisbon, and had even got a celebrated coiffeur from Paris to dress her hair, found, alas ! that her pains were in vain, for as ill-luck would have it her figure was not at its best and her looks much impaired. She vented her ill-humour on the Elector, who not unnaturally often took refuge in his sister's rooms to escape from her tongue. Matters

were growing more and more strained between them, and the husband, who at the first had been passionately in love, was beginning to weary of his wife's coldness and violent outbursts of temper. When first he went a-wooing to Cassel, Charlotte's mother, the Landgravine Amalie Elizabeth, a sensible but somewhat severe woman, had seriously warned him of her daughter's evil temper; but he, fascinated by her beauty, which in early life was striking, and not impossibly piqued by her openly declared preference for another suitor, had resolved to win her and would not be deterred. Her hand he won, but not her love; and, indeed, it may be doubted whether she had any to bestow except on herself. Cold yet jealous, indifferent to her children, though making a favourite of the boy out of opposition to her husband, who dearly loved his little girl, vanity was her one passion, and, badly as she was treated eventually by her husband, it cannot be denied there was excuse for him. In the beginning his devotion was only too marked, according to his sister, who declared she was quite ashamed to see him kiss his wife in public and even kneel at her feet. His jealousy, too, was quickly stirred, but in him it arose from warmth of feeling and the consciousness that she did not care for him as he did for her; hers was merely the suspiciousness of an exacting woman. Sophie graphically painted the situation between them in the early years of their marriage in the following passage:—

The Elector, believing that Madame could not look at any one without lessening her affection for himself, often

made accusations which she received with great indignation, and which were indeed very ill-founded. It was from a certain weakness of mind, and not from any evil design, that she loved to attract attention. There was more folly than evil in her ; but the Elector, having great delicacy of feeling, wished her to be all in all to himself and nothing to others. The slightest word from him on the subject put her into a frightful rage, which usually lasted the whole day. The Elector then employed a thousand little loving wiles to mollify her, but this treatment made her all the more rebellious, for she resembled her uncle Frederic, who was only submissive when ill-treated.

She never really incurred any just suspicions ; her overweening vanity craved admiration, not love, and she cared more for her wardrobe than for any lover. On Sophie's first Sunday at Heidelberg, when she repaired to her sister-in-law's rooms to accompany her to church, she found her with all her fine clothes laid out upon a table, enumerating whence they came and how long she had had them. This seemed very absurd to the young Princess Palatine, who had had but little occasion for indulging in such vanity. At her home they had something else to think of than their clothes, and at the Hague, she remarked, it was the fashion to have but few dresses and renew them often. A former chapter has shown with how modest a trousseau Henriette was equipped. The Electress Charlotte reckoned up her lovers in much the same spirit as she did her best dresses, and scandalised the devoted little sister by declaring she had been forced against her will to marry " a jealous old man " (the Elector was about thirty-three). The

indignant Sophie wished herself back at the Hague, where, as she averred, any complaint on the part of a woman against her husband was held a crime, and where "such foolish creatures were thought ridiculous." On Charlotte's first introduction to her sister-in-law she was too sulky to speak, simply because the wedding carriage which her mother had presented was rather less handsome, or so she fancied, than the one bestowed upon her sister. Sophie, always an excellent hand at description, gives a vivid portrait of her appearance :—

She was very tall, with an admirable complexion and most beautiful bust. Her features were irregular, and her eyebrows, which were dyed black, struck me as forming too violent a contrast with her beautiful flaxen hair ; besides, in raising them she gave a kind of twist to her high forehead which had a very odd appearance. To make up for these defects she had beautiful sparkling eyes, full pouting lips, and very fine teeth ; altogether she would be called a handsome woman.

These details are borne out by her portrait in the Castle Museum, with the exception of the flaxen hair, which there appears dark, suggesting that the hair as well as the eyebrows may have owed something to art, and changed with the changing fashion. She certainly did not shine as a mother ; for her second child, the charming little Liselotte, she seems to have cared not at all, and though out of perversity she was sometimes inclined to spoil the Electoral Prince Karellie, a sickly, timid, and rather ill-conditioned child, she showed him but little genuine affection.

Moreover, her husband always considered she had endangered his life and injured his constitution by her obstinate and selfish indulgence in hunting before he was born, a thing which had already cost her a dangerous illness and the life of her first baby.

It may well be believed that with her elder sister-in-law she would have less in common than with Sophie, who had at least the gaiety of youth, though considerably more good sense than Charlotte; but when troubles came it was in Elizabeth that she found a warm and steadfast partisan. It was as early as the Ratisbon visit that Elizabeth first found occasion to intervene and try to avert trouble, and though her action was much misunderstood and misrepresented by her sister, it is easy to read between the lines what really occurred. Sophie was taking the opportunity to have singing lessons from an Italian, Domenico del Pane, one of the Emperor's orchestra, and her brother, who had all the Stuart love of music, used to like to go to her rooms and listen to the lesson. In the evenings supper was served privately to the Elector and Electress and his two sisters, and they were waited on by the maids-of-honour. On these occasions Madame must needs observe that Mistress Carey, Sophie's favourite lady-in-waiting, poured wine for the Elector oftener than did the others, which set light to her easily inflammable jealousy and made her imagine that it was the attractiveness of this young lady that drew him so often to his sister's apartments. Elizabeth, to whom she confided her uneasiness, assured her that he came solely out of affection for

his youngest sister, in whose society he had always delighted, without a thought, we may be well assured, that Charlotte's bristling jealousy would be up in arms at the notion of a sister having so much more influence with him than she had. Sophie's idea that Elizabeth deliberately made mischief out of jealousy of the Electress's preference is obviously absurd. Henceforth, having found a listener, which was what she wanted, Charlotte waived her former dislike of Elizabeth and poured into her ear a long string of complaints of the Elector's suspiciousness—he, in fact, giving her nothing else to complain of. She tried to forbid his visits to Sophie, but he by this time was becoming restive, and went all the more.

Several letters from Elizabeth to her brother when he was absent from Heidelberg show how anxious she was to put things in as pleasant a light as possible, and make and keep peace between the pair. In September, 1652, she writes :—

Madame the Electress continually occupies herself in some little business for the house or for herself, in which she takes pleasure. I should never have believed she would be so little bored by her solitude nor so punctual in following out your orders; for fear of contravening them we separate every evening at nine o'clock.*

It appears that Mademoiselle Louise von Degenfeld, daughter of an old Suabian family with ancient ties to the Palatinate House, had just obtained a post in the Electoral household, for in the same letter Elizabeth goes on :—

* *Briefe der Kinder des Winterkönigs, Heidelberger Jahrbücher.*

Mlle. Degenfeld is two fingers taller than she (the Electress), wears no liège (cork heels ?) and calls herself of an age when she may still grow. Her face is not disagreeable, but her manner is very bad ; I do not think she knows enough Italian to be able to teach it to us. . . . The children have been at Lord Stafford's ; I don't think if you had been here, you would have allowed them to go, for it does more harm to them than good to him.

They were certainly over-young for visiting if the date of this letter is correct—the elder under two, the baby not six months old !

A month later it would seem there had been some little complaint of Charlotte's behaviour, for Elizabeth writes, anxious to pacify. She begins her letter in French, then drops suddenly into English, a custom with them all :—

For the going a-gossiping to foolish women, it had not been if Charlotte had guessed you would not like it. For as yet she hath been very careful to observe your orders, but because you commanded her to go to the prophetess I judged myself you did it to divert her ; but this hath not been all her employment, for the most part she acted the housewife in cutting linen for the house and for herself ; the visits were made commonly on Sunday in the afternoon. I have not been with her in all, being forced to keep my chamber for a hurt upon the knee, but she hath been only with Rocheploure the chamberlain and Streithagen, and now the round is done there will be no more.

She had the horses brought into the field last Thursday because she would try your sorrel, but she went from him presently and did not like him, so there will be no riding

neither. As for the discourses, they are as you know, but everybody can witness that she speaks but seldom to any men. She kept her gravity well enough to the Duke of Würtemberg's Master of the Horse that was sent to invite you both to the christening. I hope she will do the like to Beneburg, who is expected here from Cassel for the same purpose, but to mend her discourse she must have the example of some who neither despiseth nor envies, and if we shall go to the Diet (which as yet I cannot believe) we must all disaccustom ourselves of laughing at unusual clothes or grimaces, for when we do it in private we mind it also in public and make others mark it, and those that are offended by it may revenge themselves of our follies on you.

This little touch recalls the old days of the brothers and sisters at the Hague, and how they used to make merry over the oddities of their mother's visitors. The rest of the letter is taken up with business matters of no moment. Charles in a letter to Rupert refers to this invitation to the christening at Cassel with the comment, "but I do not love to go a-gossiping." *

In the following June Elizabeth writes from Augsburg to announce the birth of Charlotte's third baby, who died, Charles being at the time at Ratisbon for the coronation of the King of Rome. Her next letter speaks of Charlotte's very serious illness, and urges that as soon as she can be moved the Elector should come and take them back to Heidelberg. Her letters to her brother during his frequent absences were very regular; they certainly betray nothing of the mischief-

* *Rupert, Prince Palatine, Eva Scott.*

making propensities that her sister credited her with, but are full of good sense and kindly feeling.

About the same time her old friend Anna van Schurmann was on a visit to Cologne, her birthplace, and Elizabeth, hearing of her being comparatively near, expresses a wish to see her again, recalling pleasantly her learning and her virtues, and forgetting the differences which had divided them. The meeting, however, was not destined to take place till both were growing old women.

In the short, wintry days of February Heidelberg was gay with company ; the Margrave of Baden and the Duke of Lüneburg, brother of the man who afterwards sought the hand of Sophie, came on a visit. To entertain these distinguished guests a ballet was got up by the students of the University and four young noblemen. Elizabeth was present, and briefly mentions the fact in a letter to her cousin the Abbess of Herford. In the same letter she speaks of a projected journey to Worms, but declares that for her part she would far rather stay at home in her accustomed surroundings, where she was so comfortably lodged.

In this year there seems to have been a serious idea that the Queen of Bohemia would really come to take up her abode in Heidelberg. In the treaty just concluded between Cromwell and the States-General there was some provision secured for her that would enable her to pay her creditors and leave the Hague if she were so minded, and her son actually wrote to know which rooms in the castle she would choose to occupy ;

whether the Otto-Heinrich wing, with the great hall for herself and the rooms above for her women, or the upper rooms "in my grandfather's building (the Friedrichsbau), which are upon one floor with the ruined Hall of Mirrors." * This shows him to have been really expecting her coming, and incidentally suggests the condition of the castle at this time and the amount of repair it had undergone. The English wing, later utterly demolished, had been restored and was occupied by the Electress. Elizabeth refers to this intended move as an almost settled thing in one of her letters to her cousin the Abbess, saying that Louise cannot be spared to pay her a visit until her mother comes to Heidelberg, as she was her constant companion, but that from thence she may very well travel to Herford via Cassel.† The journey was, however, again postponed, and the Queen still remained at the Hague.

It must have been a great happiness to Elizabeth when Rupert joined them, though a happiness not unmingled with grief. He came back from his long and adventurous voyage with health shattered, fortunes broken, a landless man; and, alas! he came back alone. Maurice's ship had been lost off the Virgin Islands in the hurricane which had destroyed Rupert's fleet, and there was every reason to fear he had perished. Moreover, between the brothers relations quickly became strained; Rupert claimed a younger son's portion, and Charles, who not only was by nature

* *Royal Letters*, Bromley.

† *Briefe der Kinder des Winterkönigs, Heidelberger Jahrbücher*.

disinclined to part with property, but also had seen the mischief of continually weakening the Palatinate by division, declined to make any adequate provision for him. In June came a rumour which agitated the brothers and sisters with hope ; it was reported that the year before Maurice had been seen alive in the hands of the Turks at the galleys. Charles writes to his mother, 17th June, 1654 :—

As for my brother Maurice, my brother Rupert (who is now here) thinks the way by the Emperor's agent at Constantinople too far about for his liberty (if the news be true) ; but that from Marseilles we may best know the certainty, as also the way of his releasement.

Elizabeth refers to this in one of her letters to her cousin with her characteristic want of sanguineness :—

We know nothing certain of brother Maurice ; some say he is in Algiers, taken by pirates ; they have sent to make enquiry, but I cannot believe it unless I should see it in his own hand.

She, we may be sure, would sympathise rather with Rupert's anxious haste to be reunited with his best-loved brother than with the Elector Palatine's cautious and leisurely arrangements. The news, however, proved untrue ; it was too evident Maurice had indeed perished in the wreck of " The Honest Seaman." Worry always told upon Elizabeth's health, and that summer she speaks of trouble with her eyes and an intention to try " the waters "—whether at Spa, which had done her so much good before, or at Ems, much nearer the Palatinate, she does not say.

She was not to find a lasting home in Heidelberg ; the crisis in her brother's domestic affairs, which was assuming a very serious aspect, before long drove her forth again. Charlotte, always her own worst enemy, having so often cried " Wolf ! " with so little cause, when her position was seriously menaced, obstinately shut her eyes until too late. She had wearied out her husband's affection with her tempers and suspicions, and at length he did in truth seek consolation elsewhere. The young maid-of-honour, Mademoiselle von Degenfeld, of whom Elizabeth made somewhat slighting mention in a letter already quoted, presently attracted him, not merely by her soft beauty and fair colouring, but no less by her gentleness and sweet temper. She tried, poor girl, to behave with discretion, but it was hard for her not to respond to the advances of the Elector, who took her part when the Electress treated her with harshness ; she did the wisest thing she could in begging for her dismissal when she found that his kindness meant something more serious, but Charlotte, with suicidal obstinacy, refused to grant it. It was extraordinary that her easily aroused suspicions should in this case have been lulled, but it was not until a complication was brought about by Rupert that her eyes were opened. He too was attracted by the gentle and feminine charm of Louise, and wrote her a love-letter which by some accident was appropriated by the Electress. Greedy of admiration as she was, she readily believed it intended for herself, and on their next meeting gently chid him for having ventured so to address a sister-

in-law. Dismayed and embarrassed, with many blushes Rupert confessed for whom the letter was destined, and found he had stirred up a hornets' nest. Charlotte was infuriated by mortified vanity which she could scarcely conceal; she searched Louise's room, and breaking open a little casket, the gift of the Elector, found letters not from Rupert, but, what was far more serious, from her husband, in one of which he offered, if Louise would listen to him, to arrange for a divorce and make her his wife. There was, of course, a terrible explosion, and the Elector Palatine formally took Louise under his protection, renewing the promise he had made, as neither she nor her family would consent to any but a legitimate connection.

Protestant opinion on the sanctity of the marriage tie was very lax, and Charles Louis took the same way as had his great-grandfather, William the Silent. He assembled a council of lawyers and divines, who being of his own appointing were pledged to carry out his wishes, and got them to declare his marriage with Charlotte Elizabeth of Hesse-Cassel null and void on the ground of his wife's conduct, which throughout their wedded life had been "contradictory, disobedient, obstinate, sulky, and rebellious." Accordingly he conceived himself free to contract another alliance, and he made a morganatic marriage with Louise von Degenfeld, celebrated according to the Lutheran rite. Her children could not inherit, but the rank of *Raugräfin* was bestowed upon her, and she regarded herself, and was by most of her husband's



LOUISE HOLLANDINE, PRINCESS PALATINE AND ABBESS OF MAUBUISSON

*From a painting by Gerard Honthorst at Burg Rheinstein.
By permission of His Royal Highness Prince Henry of Prussia*



subjects regarded, as his lawful wife. Charlotte, however, refused her consent to the divorce, which without it was not valid, and continued to reside in Heidelberg, being one of those unfortunate people whose only idea of upholding their rights is to make themselves as unpleasant as possible.

All this was the greatest distress to Elizabeth ; she had little personal sympathy with Charlotte, but still less with the injustice with which she was treated. She upheld her so far as she could, but no one had much influence with the Elector Palatine, and when the affair was absolutely concluded she found her own position in Heidelberg untenable. She could not recognise the Raugräfin, nor did she wish to make an open breach with her brother by refusing to do so. Even Sophie, who sympathised with him far more than she did and whose standards were not quite so high, felt the same difficulty when in Heidelberg ; but for her the knot was cut by her marriage and removal to Hanover ; for Elizabeth there was nothing but another exodus. Her cousin Hedwig, of whom she was so fond, who had been her companion and pupil at Krossen, was married to Charlotte's brother, the Landgrave of Hesse, so to Cassel Elizabeth withdrew, earnestly counselling Charlotte to do the like, feeling that the position of the discarded wife in Heidelberg was no longer for her own dignity and only increased the scandal. It was some years before she could induce her to take this obviously prudent step and live under the protection of her own family.

Before she left she had the further pain of seeing

the quarrel between her brothers reach an acute stage, embittered no doubt by the Elector's knowledge of Rupert's unrequited feeling for Louise, though ostensibly still on the question of property. In the end Rupert shook the dust from his feet and went away in a rage, vowing that never again would he set foot in his brother's dominions. So the remnants of the family, which had gathered in their old home, were scattered once more, and Elizabeth found herself again an exile, amongst affectionate relatives, it is true, but a mere visitor with no home which she could call her own.

CHAPTER XIV

SISTER AND COUSIN

Elizabeth concerns herself for Louise Hollandine—Writes to her cousin the Abbess of Herford—Suggestion of making Louise coadjutrix—A visit proposed, but postponed—Importance of genealogy—Descent not from Queen Elizabeth of England—Louise leaves her home—Becomes a Catholic and takes the veil—Scandalous reports set about—The King of England and Duke of York visit her—She is made Abbess of Maubuisson—Her character—Elizabeth at Cassel—She announces to her brother the death of the Electress Dowager—Death of Princess Catherine—Letter to Prince Rupert—Visit to Marie Eleonora, Princess of Simmern.

AFTER having brought the marriage of her sister Henriette to a successful issue, Elizabeth began to concern herself for the future of the one next herself in age, Louise Hollandine, who, nearing thirty, was still unwed, and much of her correspondence during the years she spent in Heidelberg was concerned with the project formed on behalf of Louise. The spinsterhood of the latter was by no means due to want of attractiveness ; by many she was considered the most fascinating of the sisters, but her careless gaiety and love of fun, in which she resembled her mother, her easy manners and want of prudence, had involved her in more than one undesirable flirtation with men

whose pretensions as suitors could not be seriously regarded, besides the unfortunate scandal which had mixed her name in the d'Épinay affair. After that it was more than ever desirable that some arrangement should be made for her future. She had a small provision in the annuity settled on her by her god-fathers the States-General, and having a constant occupation and interest in her devotion to painting, which she pursued with zeal at every possible moment, she seemed for her own part quite content to remain at the Hague with her mother.

For her it was not a match that was sought by the prudent elder sister, but the dignified retirement of the cloister. Their cousin on their father's side, Elizabeth Louise of Zweibrücken, was, as has already been mentioned, Abbess of Herford, an ancient institution which at the Reformation had been protestantised, and was still found an acceptable refuge for the daughters of noble or princely families, and it occurred either to Elizabeth or to the aunts (aunts also to the Abbess) that here might be found a suitable home for Louise if, as then seemed probable, her mother should take up her abode at Heidelberg. Whoever first mooted the idea, it was Elizabeth who approached her sister on the subject, as may be gathered from the tepid letter of acceptance Louise wrote to her cousin :—

I have not before taken the liberty of troubling your Grace * with my worthless writing, but now as I under-

* "Euer Liebden," an untranslatable expression rendered by Miss Scott literally "your Belovedness." It was much used between near relations of rank.

stand from my sister in Berlin that you have the kindness to wish me to have a place in your institution, for which I am very highly obliged to you, and wish nothing better than to deserve such a favour from your Grace, and to receive your commands. And meanwhile I beg you would further do me the kindness to let me know how I should pay over the three hundred rix thalers which one must give to purchase a position in the institution, and I would not delay to send the money as your Grace may command.

While making no objection to the scheme, Louise opposed to it a passive resistance on the ostensible ground that it was impossible for her to leave her mother alone while she remained at the Hague. The event showed that neither that reason nor any objection to a conventual life weighed with her, but she did not mean to bind herself by entering Protestant Herford. In the summer of 1653 the matter was still pending, and Elizabeth writes anent a proposed experimental visit :—

Concerning my sister's stay at Herford, your Grace might see by the letters it was no resolved affair, but only a matter to be discussed between us on which each one might give his opinion, and because they said she ought to go to Herford to make herself known to the Capitular Body and win them to her side, which my brother does not think such a little time as a fortnight would be sufficient for and therefore would rather pay her board, but nothing was resolved without hearing your opinion. You would greatly oblige me if you would give it me with your usual candour, and may assure yourself it will never be taken amiss by us.

We have been here three weeks and thought to stay

only eight or ten days more, but my brother's wife miscalculated again and brought a son into the world who only remained a few hours, having been injured at birth but otherwise a healthy child. Now we must remain three weeks longer while my brother goes to Ratisbon for the coronation of the King of Rome, whence he will return to take us back to Heidelberg.

This letter was written from Augsburg, so too was the next, referring to the serious illness of Charlotte and also to the oppressive heat. A good deal of the correspondence is occupied with sympathy and advice on the difficulties which the Abbess experienced with the town authorities of Herford, but this is somewhat tedious, and without the corresponding letters not easily comprehensible. There had always been a certain amount of friction between the rival powers, and the new constitution of things the Peace had brought was as yet not quite understood. In a letter from Heidelberg the following winter Louise's claims are referred to :—

The Electress writes to me that your Grace has it in mind to appoint a coadjutrix, but I hope you would not pass by your own blood ; I heard in Neustadt that you were going to take a Lutheran, which I can hardly believe, for then no support could be looked for, as you yourself wrote. Let me know whether you receive my letter and write quite openly what is in your mind, that we may understand how to act, by which you would oblige us far more than by leaving us vain hopes. I want to hear also how the quarrel ended and whether the town obeyed the Elector's mandate, but especially news of your health which concerns me most, for I am truly sorry to get letters

so seldom, and especially that in this place I have no means of showing my works and without empty compliment how much I am yours, &c.

After this seems to have followed a little misunderstanding, because the Abbess believed a report that had got about that Elizabeth was about to turn Catholic. Her aunt, the Electress Dowager, explained her cousin's silence, and Elizabeth wrote :—

If I had any desire to do such a thing I should have done it when there was a crown to be won by it ; now nobody would give me a peppercorn for it. As to the arguments, I have long known them all and do not fear lest any one should bring forward new ones, still less shrink from talking with priests nor to esteem and like them when they have any good in them, as I have done all my life and would if they were Turks and Heathens.

Though both principals seemed disposed to let the matter of Louise's appointment drop, Elizabeth continued to keep it in remembrance and from time to time try to forward a visit, and a year later she writes :—

I must tell you that the Queen my mother will certainly come here this spring, and then if you see fit, and the above proposition pleases you, my sister could wait upon you for a day or for four days, and bring letters of recommendation, but if it is inconvenient or your Grace should have other views so that you do not wish it, write to me openly, for you know Else well that she cannot act otherwise than candidly and does not like others to act differently to her.

In March she writes that the visit must be postponed till May, for the Queen of Bohemia will not come to Heidelberg till then and cannot be left alone so long ; moreover, it will be easier for Louise to travel to Herford via Cassel—that is, she adds with evident misgiving, if the Abbess is in earnest in offering her the position of Coadjutrix, believing she would not put her cousin off with a denial so late in the day. In another year matters had got so far that the question of a suitable house for Louise in Herford was debated, and a serious inquiry was made into her ancestry, a certain number of arms and quarterings being necessary for eligibility to the Abbey ; and a doubt had been thrown on the descent of the Queen of Bohemia on account of her father, James I, having succeeded Queen Elizabeth, whose birth was held on the Continent as of more than doubtful legitimacy. Princess Elizabeth writes to clear up the point with some indignation :—

I understand that the said Deaconess has told her aunt that my sister cannot establish her ancestors on the mother's side. I confess there are two princely coats of arms amongst the eight not to be deciphered if that is necessary, but the other six are royal and one might go further without finding among them any so mean as her (the deaconess's) best. You mean perhaps because the mother of Queen Elizabeth was a bad woman, but that has nothing to do with us, we come from Henry VII, whose wife was a king's daughter of the same house as himself, and so was the Stuart a sister's son, also Mary of Scotland.

These questions of descent were made of considerable importance by the great Imperial Abbeyes (Reichs-abtei as they were called), which with their voice in the councils of the empire possessed quite as much political as religious significance—more since the Reformation. Another point raised in the same letter was a report which Elizabeth had heard from Jungfer Kolbin, one of the Herford sisterhood now in attendance on herself, who subsequently became governess to her little niece Liselotte. On her authority it was affirmed that the “ladies of the Mountain,” that is, the members of the daughter community at the Stiftsberg, had said God forbid they should be placed under so flighty an Abbess; but though Louise had certainly laid herself open on occasion to such accusation, it appeared that the notion was set on foot by a rival candidate for the same post. These difficulties were disposed of, yet the negotiations languished. Louise herself was but lukewarm in the matter; the event showed why.

In 1658 one late December day at seven o'clock in the morning Louise left her home on foot and alone and travelled to the sea-coast. One account relates that she made pretence of going for the day to Scheveningen, but it is hardly likely she would have announced an intention of doing any such thing in the depth of winter; silently she departed and never came back, and when, in astonishment and uneasiness, search was made, a letter which she had left for her mother was found, confessing that she had become a convert to the Catholic Church, and in dread of her

mother's indignation and the expostulations she knew she would have to encounter, she had taken flight, driven to a sudden decision for fear of being obliged to receive the Holy Sacrament on Christmas Day according to the Protestant rite, or to declare herself, for which she had not the courage. She did not reveal whither she was going, but promised to write as soon as she was settled.*

The Queen was stunned at the news. Louise had always been her favourite daughter and for years her sole companion ; she had not gone with her sisters to Heidelberg because she would not leave her mother alone. The step was utterly unexpected, though she had always had a great affection for her brother Ned, the next her in age, and was a good deal influenced by him, although he was younger than herself. It was remembered that for a few months past she had seemed silent and brooding, unlike her usual merry self ; but the dullness which had crept over the former gaiety of her mother's Court, the poverty and anxiety which were closing in more and more, were enough to excuse any lack of spirits, and no notice was taken. The Princess had occasionally accompanied a Catholic friend of hers and her brother Edward's, the Princess of Hohenzollern, daughter of Count Henry of Bergen-op-Zoom, and wife of Eitel Friedrich, Prince of Hohenzollern, to Mass, but the Queen had never objected, probably thinking Louise hardly seriously minded enough to be moved to such a step, though she might enjoy the music and symbolism of a worship that

* *Lives of the Princesses of England*, Vol. VI, Green.

would appeal to her artistic tastes far more than the bareness and coldness of the Reformed Church.

The States-General were appealed to for aid to find the Princess and restore her to her mother, and under their sanction a M. de la Bocage, who was known to have brought the Princess a letter on the eve of her departure, was arrested, and search being made among his papers, two letters from the Princess of Hohenzollern were found containing two plots for the escape of Louise. The Queen, indignant at the betrayal of trust on the part of one whom she had considered her friend, wrote a vehement letter of reproach, to which she replied that she had not been the instigator but solely the confidante of the step Louise had taken, and as a Catholic considered herself bound to aid her. Louise also wrote vindicating her friend, and taking upon herself what she had done.

It would have been wise to have dropped the matter, so far at least as the lady's part was concerned, but the Queen was so incensed that she urged the States to take measures of vengeance, which they did by revoking some of the privileges she enjoyed as heiress of Bergen-op-Zoom, provoking her into making reprisals in the shape of cruel and unwarrantable insinuations as to the true motives of Louise's flight.* Rupert, always his mother's stand-by, took the matter up and wrote to the States, thanking them for aid already given in the matter, and begging them to put a stop to the slanders against his sister's honour. For these there appeared absolutely no foundation,

* *Memoir of the Princess of Bohemia*, Blaze de Bury.

unless colour were lent them by the somewhat indiscreet conduct of Louise on a former occasion. She had been met at Delftshaven by a boat, which conveyed her to Bergen-op-Zoom and thence to Antwerp, where she took up her abode for a time in the Carmelite Convent. Of a lover there was no smallest trace. Her brother Edward wrote, encouraging and supporting her, and also endeavoured to pacify the Queen and mitigate her wrath against the Princess of Hohenzollern. "Ned is so wilful," the Queen wrote: "he will not believe anything against the P. of Q." * Moreover, the King of England, who was with his sister at Breda, visited the delinquent, having ascertained that his aunt would like him to do so. The Queen wrote to Rupert from the Hague, 4th March (1659 ?) :—

The King and my niece and my other nephew (James who was her godson and always devoted to her) were at Antwerp and went to see Louyse in the monastery. I sent the copy of Sir Th. Berkley's letter to Broughton, and my nephew and niece did write to me before they saw her to know if I would be content they should see her, which I told them would be too much honour for her; but since the P. of Q. had told so base lyes of her, they would do a very good action to see her, to justify her innocence. The P. of Q. did go to Antwerp twice and spoke with L. I have not yet the particulars neither in general. L. writes to Merode they parted upon very ill terms. I hope we shall have what passed betwixt them. By my next you shall have it. The P. of Q. at her return hither made many believe that she had brought

* Probably Z. Zollern.

me letters from the King, my niece, and Louysa to justify her, and that she had herself given them to me, and talked two hours with me ; which is a most impudent lye. . . . I forgot to tell you that the King and my niece did chide Louysa for her change of religion and for leaving me so unhandsomely ; she answered that she was very well satisfied with her change, but very sorry that she had displeased me. Just now the French letters are come. . . . The Bishop of Antwerp hath written a letter to your brother Edward where he clears Louysa from that base calumny ; yet Ned is so wilful as he excuses the P. of Toleme [*sic*].*

A month later she writes :—

Your sister Louyse hath arrived at Chaillot. . . . Ned doth acknowledge his error in having too good an opinion of the P. of Q.

Soon afterwards Edward met her at Rouen and brought her to Paris, where she was lodged for a time in the apartments of Queen Henrietta Maria at Chaillot and subsequently received into the convent of Maubuisson, of which she was shortly made Abbess.

Her niece Liselotte, Duchess of Orleans, was very fond of her when in later years she was living in Paris, and wrote of her in a letter to her aunt Sophie :—

One cannot believe how pleasant and playful the Princess of Maubuisson was. I always visited her with pleasure ; no moment could seem tedious in her company. I was in greater favour with her than all her other nieces, because I could converse with her about everything that she had gone through in her life, which the others could

* *Royal Letters*, Bromley.

not. She often talked to me in German, which she spoke very well. She told me her comical tales. I asked her how she had been able to habituate herself to a stupid cloister life. She laughed and answered: "I never speak to the nuns except to communicate my orders." She had a deaf nun in her room, that she might not speak. She said she had always liked a country life, and fancied she lived like a country girl. I said: "But to get up in the night and go into the church!" She answered laughing that I knew well what painters were; they liked to see dark places, and the shadows that the light caused, and that this gave her every day fresh taste for painting. She could turn everything this way that it should not seem dull.

Louise continued to a late age to occupy herself with painting, and adorned her own and many neighbouring churches with sacred pictures. She died at the age of eighty-eight. Calumny sticks fast, and even yet adheres to her name, partly from the prejudice of Protestant writers of the last century against nuns, partly from a misunderstood passage in one of the letters of her niece the Duchess of Orleans, quoted by Madame Blaze de Bury in justification of her unfounded assertion that Elizabeth never had any sympathy or intercourse with her sister. This was to the effect that she used to swear "by the fourteen children she had borne!" and gloried in her shame. Apart from the fact that history knows nothing of the existence of any such children, it is glaringly out of harmony with all Liselotte's other affectionate mentions of her aunt. If genuine, it probably refers to her predecessor, about whom there really had been

scandal ; if actually spoken of Louise, the reference may have been to jesting words of old bygone reports when they had ceased to rankle, in the questionable taste of that day in which both the Abbess of Maubuisson and her niece were too prone to indulge. As a matter of serious testimony by Monseigneur Bossuet and others who had known her well, she had the credit of having restored the discipline of her convent, which before her day had grown extremely lax.

That her change of faith was a great distress to her eldest sister as well as to her mother is not to be questioned. We have seen how deeply Elizabeth felt it in the case of Edward, regarding it, as she did, as in some sort treason against their father's memory and the family tradition ; and though she had perhaps grown more liberally minded since that day, the cruel reports to which it gave rise cannot but have bitterly aggravated the shock. It is significant that she never refers to it in her letters to her cousin : where Elizabeth felt most she said least. That she bore her sister no grudge and continued to correspond with her is shown not only by the touching and affectionate letter she wrote her from her deathbed, but by a letter of Edward's to Charles Louis, in which he says :—

I send you a copy of the Papal Brief to the Princess Louise with the letter of the Cardinal Nephew. She still lives in her retreat with the greatest satisfaction and declares that for herself and for the nuns who are passionately attached to her, she has never been so content as now. La Grecque (Elizabeth) has written to ask her for the Rule of the Convent and for a pattern of the habit.

I don't know whether it is to make a similar foundation in the place where she is with Catherine, but I doubt if they could live in such harmony as ours do.

The conversion of Louise took place at the end of the same year in which Elizabeth had found herself obliged to leave Heidelberg, and for the next few years the latter had no settled home. Much of her time she spent at Cassel with her favourite cousin Hedwig, now wife of the Landgrave, helping her with the education of her little son, who afterwards did credit to his upbringing, becoming a man of distinguished attainments and an excellent ruler. She was, as always, a welcome visitor at Krossen or Berlin, and some time in 1660 her favourite brother Rupert was there with her, his visit being mentioned in one of the Queen of Bohemia's letters. He was occupying his enforced and unwelcome idleness in his old hobby of engraving, and took lessons from le Vaillant. He was also studying and experimenting in his new method of mezzotint engraving, the secret of which he had had from a German soldier while on campaign many years before, but himself brought to perfection. Elizabeth no doubt would take as sympathetic and helpful an interest in his experiments as he had done in hers when she was studying chemistry for Descartes. These two were always excellent friends and good comrades, and a year or two later we find him spending several weeks with her at Cassel. Though, as Sophie avers, he sometimes laughed good-naturedly at his studious and serious elder sister—"Rupert se

raille," writes she, "de la Signora Grecque"—the warm affection between this brother and sister was never broken by any misunderstanding or strife; her letters to him have always a tone of easy confidence lacking in those to her eldest brother. During these years her correspondence is scanty, and details have to be gleaned here and there.

The spring of 1660 she spent at Krossen nursing her favourite aunt and second mother, the Electress Dowager Charlotte, whose death in April was a deep grief to her. She announced it in a letter to her brother, the Elector Palatine:—

Krossen, 20, 30 April, 1660.

It is my duty to inform you that God has withdrawn the Electress our aunt from this world the 16/28 April between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, giving her a death as peaceful as her life had been virtuous. Her last action was to look towards her sister (who had asked if she wished prayers to be made), smiling, then she closed her eyes as if to sleep and gave up her spirit without any emotion. Never was any one so regretted; they weep for her in all the neighbourhood and in the towns belonging to the Emperor as if she were the protector of the country. I will not weary you with my grief, knowing that yours will not be wanting, for you have lost a relative who was an ornament to the family of which you are Head. . . . [Some torn off.] The Elector here has sent us full mourning by the Baron de Lewen, assuring us he will do all he can for us, and has also ordered that the house should be kept up in the same way as during the lifetime of his mother, and I do not doubt his good will towards us, but as he is already at considerable charges for his wife's relations

and will be still more if it be true that Prince Radzivil is to marry Mademoiselle Marie of Orange (daughter of Henry Frederic of Nassau) I believe you will be too honourable to add the charge for your relations to this, but you will order it as you please and I hope at least you will approve my desire to undertake nothing without your sanction.

The custom of the day for all mourning to be provided by the family of the deceased was a heavy tax, and Elizabeth showed nice feeling in her suggestion to her brother, though it may have been somewhat unwelcome to him. To her cousin, the Abbess, she wrote the sad news a week later :—

I do not doubt your Grace will have heard already of our sorrow and see by your letter of the 20 that your heart had already warned you. I ought to have let you know myself, but my head was so bewildered with long watching that I really could not write. I had not been to bed for nights and by day had rested so little that my sleep was completely gone from me, but now it begins to return. We can never sufficiently lament our beloved Electress, I mean our own loss, for her Grace has found a blessed exchange, and a more peaceful end I never heard of.

Five years later, at the same season of the year, a like sorrow fell again upon her in the death of her remaining aunt. In a letter she wrote to her cousin Duke Friedrich Ludwig of Zweibrücken, to condole on the loss of an infant son, she makes touching reference to her desolation. She had expressed a hope that God would bless his other children, that they might make up to him for his loss, and adds :—

My loss will not be so soon repaired, for there will be no one on earth to love me as the Princess Catherine did. She died on Saturday 25 February (old style) it is thought of an internal abscess which broke the day before her death, after she had paid her debts, given her people their wages, made alms and attended to other little matters of business ; when they begged her to rest she answered she would not rest till seven o'clock next evening when she would enter the eternal rest, and that was the hour when God took her from the world. She had put her Will into the hands of the Elector of Brandenburg, and I have sent a copy to my brother the Elector, begging him to communicate it to you. I am made residuary legatee, but she has left legacies to all her next of kin.

A little later she wrote to Rupert from Berlin touching his legacy. The letter is included in the Bromley correspondence, being there misdated 1655 instead of 1665, and in Foucher de Careil's collection is strangely supposed to be addressed to the Elector Palatine, to whom it refers under the family nickname of " Timon." It was directed to Rupert at Rhenen, which had been bequeathed to him by his mother :—

DEAR BROTHER,—If you knew how much joy your letters afford me, I am sure you would have the good nature to let me receive them oftener than I do. Your last makes no mention of the copy of my aunt Princess Catherine's Will which I sent you. There is a ring for you. Let me know how you would have me dispose of it. I will send you the best she left, which is not very good. The Elector (of Brandenburg) hath put all in my hands ; but Timon is so vexed at the six thousand rix-dollars he is to pay me out of a clear debt, that he will not send me my annuity,

and hath commanded Geeles de Fek [*sic*] not to pay the pension which my aunt had in Poland : but our Elector will force him to it. I believe Timon would willingly force me to put my pretensions into the Elector of Mentz's hands (as his wife is like to do) and then he may have just reason to complain. I shall not do it until I see that all is lost, but then I will have my share. I am now very rich in pretensions, for my aunt has now ninety thousand rix-dollars due, for thirty years exile, in which she received not a penny out of her country. I shall engage the King if I can to write for me to the Emperor, who is to pay me and never disavowed the debt. I would willingly let fall half the sum to get the rest : and wish much more to know you still prosperous in this and all other undertakings.

Everybody here wonders that so many ships stay before havens, and do not rather go into the Indies where there is more to be got ; but everybody understands his own business. I go to attend mine at Cassel, and leave this place within a fortnight, where the Elector obliges me more than I can express. I hope you will find some occasion to thank him for it. So farewell, dear Brother.

I am more than all the world besides,

Yours

ELIZABETH.

Now that she no longer had her own aunts to go to, Elizabeth when at Berlin was the guest of her aunt by marriage, Marie Eleonora, widow of her uncle, Philip Duke of Simmern. This lady, plain even in youth, but, as her brother-in-law said of her, "*très bonne femme*," shared her niece's learned tastes, and was one of the many women who in those days followed the fashion of studying Hebrew in order to make themselves acquainted with the Old Testament in the

original. It was said to be at her instigation that Coccejus, Professor of Theology at Leyden, compiled his Hebrew-German dictionary, which remained the standard work on the subject throughout the eighteenth century. This he dedicated to his patroness, and through her he became acquainted with the Princess Palatine, to whom he paid the compliment of inscribing his translation of the Song of Solomon with a commentary. So Elizabeth had still a *pied-à-terre* in Berlin, and the learned society to which she was accustomed ; but as years passed on she realised more and more her practical homelessness, and began to long for a home and an established position of her own.

CHAPTER XV

A HAVEN

Elizabeth is suggested as coadjutrix at Herford—Misunderstandings with her cousin the Abbess—Difficulty of finding fees—Appeals to Charles Louis for aid—She is appointed to succeed Elizabeth Louise—History of the Abbey—Death of the Abbess—Enthronement of Elizabeth.

NOT long after the defection of Louise Hollandine it would appear the suggestion had been made (whether by the Abbess, the aunts, or Elizabeth herself is not clear) that the latter should become a candidate for Herford in the room of her sister. She wrote a very characteristic letter on the subject, from which we may gather that she had a reputation for liking to keep up a certain state and dignity which her cousin was a little afraid might involve the Abbey in expense, and also a talent for management which need not have been feared from her easy-going sister. The Abbess had evidently put forward certain objections. Elizabeth writes :—

I quite appreciate the favour your Grace does me in speaking so candidly, for it is certainly the greatest proof of friendship any one can give, and I beg you not to take amiss my answering in the same spirit, and believe that if

I came to the Institution I should never have the presumption to think of reforming anything which your Grace could not do, nor of keeping a greater state than you have done so as to bring the Abbey into debt. God forbid I should have such an idea, which would be not only a foolish rashness but an unpardonable theft and far enough removed from the wisdom with which you are so good as to credit me—undeserved as it is. Also I readily agree that the Abbey needs such an Abbess as would be content with its present income (unless she could herself bring an increase to it) and would seek peace rather than wealth. Solomon gave a good rule when he said we should be neither wise nor righteous overmuch, for he knew that we have not all the power to keep the bridle on our understanding, still less accommodate it to circumstances that we may not bring ourselves into difficulties. You may also believe that if you should accept me as an inmate I should not think of succeeding you; you are but five years older than I am and have had far less misfortune which naturally tends to shorten life. If I should die first I will take with me that satisfaction of having been no useless member of the body nor unfaithful servant to my gracious Abbess, so far as she will permit; if otherwise I will think that God has so ruled and be content with my Creator's infallible will. If your Grace should continue in your good mind towards me, I would only ask the assurance that another Abbess should not be put over me. As regards the revenue of the Abbey I do not fancy it higher than to furnish me with the same number of people as your Grace is able to keep. I have no desire to make great banquets which is not fitting for any Abbess; I can add 1000 thalers yearly, and if God grants me more (from the claims I have on the English and Imperial Courts) I will use it to secure my favour? (*mihr einen guhten Tag zu machen*). Since I have no posterity to

care for I get nothing, but can be content with little and with God's help keep a cheerful heart. He has led me wonderfully all my youth and will not forsake me in my age ; in Him I place all my confidence.

It was claimed both for Elizabeth and for Louise Hollandine that their entry into the cloister entitled them to the dowry promised by the Peace of Westphalia to the daughters of the Winter King ; the claim, however, was not allowed. In the next letter, which is very similar, she promises to maintain the interests of the Abbess as her own and to regard her as a real sister. " If you knew me aright," she adds, " you would know that I have no ambition and ask no more than retreat for my old age, which I may perhaps find at Herford." In the following she suggests that writing lends itself to misunderstandings, and suggests that either she shall visit her cousin at Herford the next summer, when she will be at Hanover staying with her sister Sophie, or that it might do the Abbess good and disperse her melancholy to make a journey to Cassel. Her sister also, she adds, would be pleased to welcome her at Hanover, " where she is very happy ; no small joy to me."

A year later no final decision had been arrived at. The Abbess seems to have been of a somewhat difficult temper and a little inclined to be suspicious of any possible successor. Elizabeth writes from the sick-bed of her aunt, the Electress Dowager, saying how much both she and the Elector desired to see her established at Herford, proposing to send the customary three hundred thalers and the genealogy when it can be got

at. This she supposes can raise no difficulty, being, as she says, on the one side the same as that of the Abbess herself, and on the other that of the Royal Family of England, a matter of history and not of research in libraries. The next, written very shortly before the death of the Electress, shows Elizabeth's characteristic love of solitary independence :—

7/17 April, 1660.

As your Grace has assured me in your honoured letter of 22 March that you will accept me as Canoness, I have sent full powers to General-Major Ellert and placed the 300 thalers in the hands of Antattin who will send them you. As regards my wish to live in Herford, I thoroughly explained to our Electress and cannot understand how you could get such an idea in your head, for you must know Else better than to suppose she would willingly take on her unnecessary bonds, and could do all service in her power, both to your Grace and the Abbey, from a distance, but to live there constantly under the rule of an Abbess would not be in her line (*Ihres Handels nicht*). My ancestry you shall have later ; it was made out for sister Louise and put away so safely at the Hague that it cannot be found.

That the Abbess was not quite easy to live with is shown by her continual strife with the town as well as with her Chapter, on which Elizabeth has some sage remarks to offer :—

I am heartily sorry for the disagreement with the Chapter, and cannot but blame the Canonesses who fomented it ; it is a bad trade to stir up strife, but to restore peace and order is the part of wisdom and brings the best

repute. It was a pity your Grace signed the capitulation so hastily, but now it is done it seems to me in vain to resist, for it cannot help your Grace if you wish to alter it as you could not depart from your own sign and seal if you would, and will only cause bitterness without doing any good. Christ says that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, and I think there is nothing in the world more vexatious than living in strife with those to whom one is bound. I would advise that your Grace got the Elector or his people to mediate so that the quarrel may be ended, and it would be brought to the proof which had most power better than if it were settled by your own act. I only suggest this because the affair is not so well understood by me and I may be mistaken, but your Grace knows Else well that she gives her opinion frankly when asked for it, but is no less ready to serve your Grace as you may direct. However nothing can be done till we are in Berlin again.

This was written from Krossen, and so was the next, a rather lengthy letter on the same subject. It was no wonder Elizabeth's relations desired to see her established at Herford with the prospect of succeeding to the office of her cousin, who, though not aged, was in rather feeble health. Not only was the position very desirable for her, but Elizabeth was eminently fitted for it; with her clear head, her administrative capacity, and innate sense of justice she would be able to deal with the difficulties of a critical situation created by the new constitution of affairs at the Peace, and no doubt her cousin the Elector felt she would add to the stability and importance of the abbey; and at length, but not until October, 1660, the Abbess wrote

to her brother, the Duke of Zweibrücken, to announce that she had appointed "Bass Liesbeth" coadjutrix and that she had been spending ten days with her at Herford. Difficulties, however, were not yet quite at an end. Elizabeth's appointment required confirmation by the Chapter and also from the sisters, and this seems to have given rise to a rather serious misunderstanding. A very indignant and excited letter from the Abbess accuses Elizabeth of having used undue influence with the Elector of Brandenburg to bring pressure to bear on the votes, a certain "Fräulein Lissgen," who had been appointed to the office formerly promised to Louise, having refused her compliance. Apparently some mischievous influences had been at work to stir up strife between the cousins, for Elizabeth reproaches the Abbess with lending an ear to false reports. She too lost her temper and answered in a rather incoherent epistle, in which she passionately averred "my honesty is more to me than goods and gear," and in a postscript sarcastically asks whether the Abbess missed anything after her visit to Herford. A few days later she sent a calmer and more temperately worded defence, in which the position is made much clearer :—

28 November

8 December, 1660.

MADAME,—If your Grace would listen to your memory rather than to the false reports of those who (as you yourself are aware) would gladly see us in mistrust of each other so as to take from me the power of serving you, you would not suppose that the loss of Fr Lissen's vote

would drive me to such extremities as should do injury to the Institution, for I have done nothing but what your Grace and I in the presence of Herr Geheimrath Ellert and Dr. Schlipstein agreed together, namely that I should do my best to obtain the consent of the assembled sisters to my having the office of coadjutrix, as you yourself had asked them by letter, and if the Elector or other good friends could be helpful to me in it, it could not possibly be any prejudice to your Grace, because they asked nothing from the sisters collectively but what was in accordance with your own writing. It robs the Institution of no freedom, for in asking anything from any person the liberty to give or withhold is implied, and why should it not be permitted me to employ my good friends to influence the sisters to carry out your wishes, as to Fr Lisgen to induce hers to work against them and return an unfavourable answer? Would your Grace be served thereby, as you certainly wished to make me coadjutrix as sister Louise Sacrist? You know that Dr. Schlipstein (who thoroughly understands the rules and usages of the Institution) said in your presence that if I were made coadjutrix without the consent of those interested, namely of the Chapter and the sisters, or at least a majority of them, it could not help me in the future succession, and then where would be the use? Though I wish to claim nothing at present on the ground of succession to your Grace, I must once more beg you would not give your enemies so much advantage as to be able to affirm such a palpable falsehood against so near a blood-relation of your Grace. If they do, the work will reward its master before long, but I hope better things and believe it is a mere misunderstanding and that your Grace is misled by some who from the first have tried to sow dissension between us. Perhaps there may be others in Berlin who do not rightly understand my wishes, and suggest more

to your Grace than I ask, for if your Grace of your own accord proposes to me on the said conditions to retire from the Institution, I will not press it upon you, if you have changed your mind, that as you have proposed me to the Chapter as coadjutrix and asked the consent of the sisters, it would be far more to my prejudice (should God take your Grace to Himself) than if I had never been named, which I must guard against so far as I can. If you protest against it I must suffer it, but should have cause to complain to my relations that my upright intention of serving your Grace was so ill requited, but I will do nothing to the injury of the Order and will observe my oath as well or better than others, for I hold a good conscience beyond all the treasures of the world, Also, not fearing that your Grace would be against me in this, I ask you to show this letter to my aunt and my dear cousin of Courland that they may see whether I have made any unjust demands upon your Grace, or done anything to make you doubt that I am in truth yours, &c.

The Abbess accepted this explanation with some murmurings of protest, but in a letter to her brother, thanking him for the offer of pecuniary help "*en père de famille*," Elizabeth refers to the inconstant and capricious temper of her cousin, who had raised difficulties that were only disposed of by the intervention of her ever kind friend the Elector of Brandenburg, who declared he would do nothing for the Abbess unless she kept her word to Elizabeth. Moreover, this good cousin had made her a present of a coach and six horses, knowing she would need it to transport herself and her goods to Herford, so she begs her brother to send her by Easter, when she

must change her mourning, liveries for two coachmen, two footmen, and a page, for which she sends measurements. She reminds him he has had no expense on this score since she left Heidelberg, since her late aunt had supplied her servants with liveries similar to her own. Charles evidently thought he had done enough, for when Elizabeth found she would have to pay fees for her election (which would not have to be repeated when she succeeded as Abbess) she wrote to Sophie, then on a visit to Heidelberg, to intercede with "her papa" for the loan of six hundred thalers, to be repaid when she became Abbess, or out of her jewels should she die in the meantime. These presents, with the journey and expenses of the departure from Cassel, would leave her, as she said, practically nothing to live on for that year. There was also the furnishing of a house for her in Herford to be considered, and in Sophie's Memoirs there is mention of her wish to sell the great pearl pendant her brother had given her, since in her new life she would have small need for jewels; she evidently wished her sister would buy it, that it might not go out of the family.

In May her mother sailed for England, and one of her letters to the Abbess mentions that news had been received of the Queen's safe arrival at Gravesend. It seems a suggestion had been made that Elizabeth should accompany her mother, probably when it appeared as if the coadjutrixship might fall through, but that difficulty had been safely tided over, and Elizabeth would be far better in an independent position. The proposal is not mentioned in the

Queen's letters nor in Elizabeth's; it was probably quite in the clouds. The Queen writes to Rupert from "betwixt Delft and Delftshaven" that she had seen Sophie, who looked well, and that Elizabeth was appointed coadjutrix at Herford. Mother and daughter had been very little to each other for many years past.

So at last Elizabeth was settled in a secure home with a definite provision for the future, and she and her cousin appear to have got on with tolerable harmony, though on one occasion, when the Abbess was seriously ill and Sophie on a visit to Herford, she maliciously declared she believed the Abbess was shamming that she might see how her successor would look. Like most elderly people, she had a suspiciousness of whoever was to come after her, and this no doubt was the cause of all the misunderstanding. In spite of her protest earlier, Elizabeth raised no difficulty about taking up her abode in Herford, and though she made occasional visits to Cassel or to Berlin, henceforward the little Westphalian town was her abode until the close of her life.

The Abbey of Herford* occupied a unique position in Protestant Germany. At the Reformation it had, through interest, escaped the suppression and spoliation which were the lot of most foundations of the kind, probably owing to political rights and privileges, which it would be highly inconvenient to extinguish, possibly also to the fact that the Reformation took possession of Herford almost unopposed, for otherwise its ancient dignity and venerable traditions would

* *Kleine Chronik von Herford*, Wolff.

not have saved it. Its history reaches back to very early times. In the ninth century, in the days of Charlemagne, a little township already existed at a ford where two rivers, the Werna and the Hardna, the warm and the cold—now known as Werre and Aa—met, enclosing a little space of fertile land. This was under the lordship of the Saxon hero Wittekind, and when he was subdued by Charlemagne and converted to the Christian faith, Herford found itself incorporated in the Christian Empire. Shortly after, one of Wittekind's nobles, Waltgerus, or Walther of Ravensburg, following the example of his liege lord, embraced Christianity, and in token of devotion founded in Herford a nunnery for fourteen damsels of noble birth, placing at its head his kinswoman Suala. Soon a little wooden church was built, and a chaplain, together with sacred relics, was brought over from England. In 815 Walther, who could not do as much for his foundation as he wished, placed it under the protection of Ludwig the Pious, who raised it to the rank of an Abbey and endowed it with certain lands in the vicinity. Ten years later the Abbess Swanhild built a stone basilica in place of the small erection of wood which had served its earliest needs, and by many gifts and grants of privilege it grew in importance till in the year 1220 it was raised to the rank of an Imperial Free Abbey (*Reichsabtei*), with jurisdiction over a small surrounding territory. A daughter convent soon sprang up on a neighbouring hill, called the *Stiftberg*, dedicated to St. Mary, the church being built on a site pointed out in a vision. A shepherd on the hill

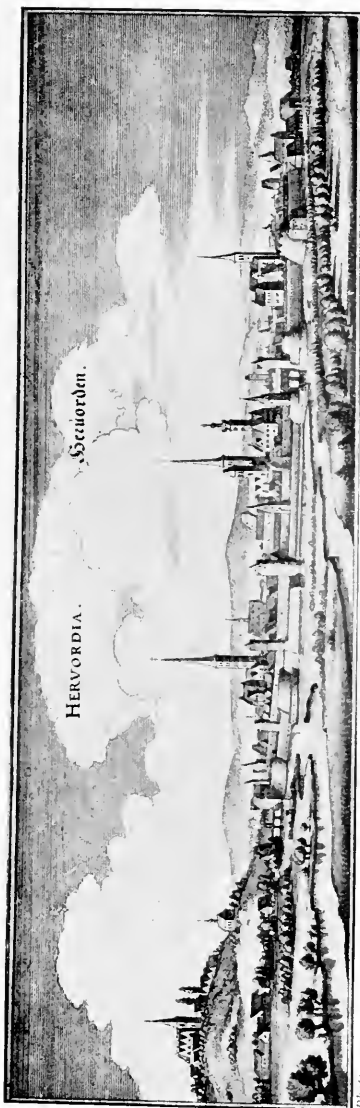


Photo.

HERFORD WITH THE STIFTBERG

From an old print in the Herford Museum. By permission of Herr Rektor Normann

Louis Fuchs, Herford

saw the Blessed Virgin in the form of a white dove sitting on a tree, so round about that tree the church was built, and in the midst of it the tree still stands, enclosed in a reliquary behind the High Altar, and preserved as religiously by its Lutheran custodians as it was by the earlier worshippers.

The position of Abbess of Herford became one of considerable importance, equal to that of a princess in her own right, since by a privilege bestowed by the Emperor Conrad she was entitled to be represented at the Reichstag, though she does not appear to have attended its deliberations in person. Early in the thirteenth century the great Minster church was begun by Abbess Godesta, and finished by Abbess Pinnosa in 1271, the former stone basilica being preserved and used as the private chapel of the convent and called the Walthercapelle. While the church was in building another important undertaking was carried out. In 1255 Abbess Ida surrounded the "Liberty" belonging to the Abbey by a fortified wall, enclosing also the suburb of the Radewich, in which was situated the Frater Church of St. James of Compostella. Herford had become so full of religious foundations and places of pilgrimage that in the Middle Ages it was called "Hillige Herford," Holy Herford. To these were added later a strong body of the Brothers of the Common Life.

Fortifications were a necessity, for strife with the town was not infrequent. The limits of the two jurisdictions were not well defined, and Herford had grown in dignity and importance, becoming a member of

the great Hanseatic League in the division of Cologne ; in witness a whale's rib, the Hanseatic symbol, was preserved in the Church of St. James. It claimed to be reckoned as one of the Free Cities, but to this dignity it was not entitled, though possessing many of the special privileges, as well as the duty of furnishing one horseman and fifteen foot to the Imperial defences.

The Reformation* very quickly took root in Herford. The Brothers of the Common Life, with their uncloistered existence and zeal for education, were quick to embrace new ideas, and many of them, especially Montanus, entered into correspondence with Luther and with Melancthon. Lutheran preachers were introduced into several of the churches with the goodwill of the town, and hymns and psalms began to be sung in the vernacular. The Abbess Anna von Limburg clung to the old ways, and for long forbade any changes being introduced into the worship at the Minster ; but she was not a strong woman, and tried to evade responsibilities for which she felt herself unequal by resigning her authority into the hands of the suzerain Duke of Jülich and Cleves. He was more for Erasmian doctrine and temporised, but the swelling flood was not to be kept out. The Abbess endeavoured to close the Minster against evangelical preachers who had been appointed, but when she saw herself threatened by the Town Council in solemn procession coming from the market-place, with the

* *Reformationsgeschichte der Stadt Herford*, Professor Dr. L. Hölscher.

executioner in his scarlet in their train, she fled through the garden to her own property of Sundern, where she spent the remainder of her days. The shock was so great that she never recovered from a trembling of the head which it caused her.

It is rather remarkable that after this the Abbey should have escaped suppression ; probably its political importance saved it, and its princely patrons saw that it might provide a dignified retreat for their unmarried sisters and aunts, whose voice in public affairs might be made useful. The nine commissioners appointed to inquire into and close religious foundations were evidently anxious to put an end to this foundation as well as to the Brotherhood of the Common Life ; but many members of the latter body were personal friends of Luther, and to him they appealed on their own behalf and on that of the Abbey, under the protection of which they had been established. He gave his judgment in favour of continuing both under a Protestant constitution, and himself wrote in his own hand, and later by that of Melancthon, to the Abbess. She, poor lady, submitted to the inevitable, and as a dowry was settled on her it seems probable she withdrew to her own estate and took no further part in the administration. Some of the sisters had probably already accepted the Reformed doctrines, and those who had not either gave way or retired.

In the succession strife of Jülich and Cleves the protectorate of Herford passed to the Elector of Brandenburg, and by the Treaty of Westphalia the town lost its independence and was incorporated in

his dominions. The Chapter, however, retained its independent connection with the empire, being recognised as third amongst the four female ecclesiastical Principalities, and was permitted to exercise its two votes in the Reichstag. These rights were guaranteed to the Abbess and confirmed by a formal declaration to the Princess Palatine, executed by the Elector of Brandenburg in 1669. In all legal acts and documents the style and title of the Abbess of Herford was "Princess and Prelatess of the Holy Roman Empire."

After all these strange vicissitudes the Abbey had settled down into comparative quiet, only occasionally disturbed by disputes with the town, when the Princess Palatine was appointed to assist her cousin in its administration. This was no sinecure ; not only was there a large household of noble ladies to rule over, with the oversight of good works amongst the poor, but beyond the colony of servants and dependents gathered round the Abbey there was jurisdiction over a small territory of some seven thousand souls, and considerable business to be transacted with the large incomings from farms, vineyards, mills, and factories. The two ladies appear to have worked together very harmoniously, in spite of the misunderstandings and dissensions which had preceded the appointment of Elizabeth as coadjutrix.

In her new preoccupations Elizabeth had not ceased to feel an interest in family affairs, and suggested a marriage between her niece and the son of her favourite cousin, the Elector of Brandenburg. It came to nothing, however ; Liselotte was but fifteen, and her



ELIZABETH, ABBESS OF HERFORD
From an old print in the Herford Museum. By permission of Herr Rector Normann

father in no haste to part with her. Perhaps at that time it hardly satisfied his ambition for her. Far better had it been than the fatal French alliance. Sophie wrote of it to her brother, saying that Elizabeth was on good terms with the ministers, and could doubtless bring it about if he wished it. "If the Electress dies," she wrote (she was in consumption at the time), "E. will have something to say in it; the Elector is very docile and she very free with him." *

In 1667 the death of the Abbess Elizabeth Louise placed the Princess Palatine at the head of the Abbey, and she was solemnly enthroned in the Minster church in the presence of all her Court and her vassals, of the Councillors of State and magistrates of Brandenburg, and of the clergy and dignitaries of Herford, and recognised by a delegate from the Emperor.

Here, then, was Elizabeth, after nearly fifty years of exile and dependence, established in a secure and dignified home of her own, with occupation for her administrative capacity, scope for her large charity, and undisturbed tranquillity for the study in which she still took delight. A contemporary description pictures the portly dame seated in the courtyard during the whole forenoon, her knitting in her never idle fingers, hearing and adjudging causes that were brought before her, like the prophetess Deborah under her oak tree.

Though the great Abbey has disappeared, its site now occupied by a police-station and a factory for agricultural implements, the little town in its busy

* *Briefwechsel der Herzogin Sophie von Hannover*, Bodermann.

quiet is wonderfully unchanged since the days when the heavy coach of the Abbess used to rumble over its paved streets and out to the wooded hill when she visited her other daughters at the Stiftberg. Herford prides itself on its industries and its exports, but it is defiled by few or no great factory chimneys; its two narrow, bustling streams turn its wheels and work its looms, and its factory hands dwell for the most part in the same old gabled houses with carved barge boards on which her eyes may have looked; and still the tradition lingers of the charities and good works of the Abbess Elizabeth. The town is very green; many of the houses even in the streets are festooned with vines, their fresh foliage showing bright against the red-tiled or black house fronts; and where the stream has but just escaped from driving the carpet-loom, weeping willows trail over it and lave their soft, long fingers.

For more than a century after Elizabeth's death her Abbey kept on its quiet and useful course, but in 1803 it was secularised, and in the re-constitution of Europe that took place under the treaties of 1815 the Abbey lost its independence, and both it and the town became merged in the kingdom of Prussia. The Abbey lands were soon after sold and the ancient buildings pulled down.

CHAPTER XVI

RELIGIOUS LIFE IN A PROTESTANT NUNNERY

Elizabeth's tendency to mysticism—Anna van Schurmann asks for an asylum for the Labadists—Career of Jean de Labadie—Evil reports—Elizabeth invokes the protection of the Elector of Brandenburg—Persecution by the burghers of Herford—Visit of Prince Charles and his tutor—Paul Hackenberg's narrative—Departure of the Labadists—Visits from Quakers—Correspondence with Robert Barclay—Visit from William Penn—His letters—His description of the Abbess.

IT might have been expected that the friend and disciple of Descartes, the philosophic princess who had been so forward in advising the founding of the University at Duisberg, where her master's tenets reigned supreme, would, when the power lay in her own hands, have made of her Abbey the home of Cartesianism ; but Elizabeth's point of view had imperceptibly shifted with advancing years, and now the mystic tenets of the friend of her youth, Anna van Schurmann, appealed to her more strongly than the colder teachings of philosophy. She was still a seeker after truth, but she sought it rather in some of the newer developments of Protestantism which in the later years of the seventeenth century were springing up on all sides. She had endured many sorrows, and as age crept on she turned more and

more from speculative thought to the consolations of religion.

She had been but a little time at the head of her Abbey when she received a letter from her old friend, begging for an asylum for herself and a small band of Labadists, who were being persecuted if not maligned, as the Quakers in England were persecuted by their fellow Protestants. Accounts of the founder of this little sect, Jean de Labadie, vary so widely that it is not easy to tell whether he were in truth mystic or charlatan, or a little of both. He was, at any rate, a man of unbalanced mind, an enthusiast if not a fanatic, gifted with a power of personal influence which made him erect himself into a kind of Pope over his followers, and imagine himself possessed of special illumination. He was born a Catholic and educated at the Jesuit Seminary at Bordeaux, but adopting Jansenist opinions, he withdrew from the Order and went to Paris to join the Abbé de St. Cyran. Soon he became noted as an eloquent preacher, and began to draw around him a little band of adherents, and it presently was reported he was preaching heretical doctrines: a breach with his Church became inevitable, and in 1650 he declared himself a Protestant. But it was a Protestantism of his own invention he desired to set up, and he would in no wise submit himself to the rigid rule of the Reformed Church in Amsterdam, whither he had gone. His religious views were founded on a belief in interior illumination—at least, in that vouchsafed to himself; to the Protestant appeal to the Bible he replied that

religion existed before the Scriptures. To his unorthodox opinions on matters theological he added socialistic ideas, which touched the Hollanders more nearly ; he advocated community of goods, and—report added—community of wives also, and his expulsion from Holland was resolved upon by the Synod of Dort. He thereupon betook himself to Geneva, where his teachings were looked upon with no less suspicion.

It is probable that the reports of his immorality were unfounded. It is notorious how easily such rumours gain credence in the case of unpopular religions, and it is hardly likely that a woman of mature years and of such unblemished virtue and austerity as Mademoiselle van Schurmann would have attached herself to his little body of converts, had there been reasonable foundation for reproach. Moreover, her brother Gottschalk became one of Labadie's most ardent disciples, and greatly influenced his sister. Brilliantly endowed though she was, she was one of those women who love to submit their intellect to masculine guidance. Never did Princess Elizabeth yield her judgment blindfold to that of Descartes as did Anna Schurmann to Dr. Voëtius, and later she was to the full as submissive to her new teacher. She had always had a decidedly mystical bent, and she now cast aside her worldly learning as a thing of no moment, and repented of poems as though they had been sins.

The Walloon church at Middleburg was presently offered to Labadie, and there Anna and other disciples, chiefly women, joined him and formed a little con-

gregation, renouncing the world and leading a kind of community life until his formal condemnation by the Synod obliged him to seek another asylum. In this strait Anna bethought herself of her former friend the Princess Palatine, always generous, always serious and deeply interested in religion, and now in a position to help her ; so to her she wrote, begging leave for the little colony to come to Herford and place themselves under the protection of the Abbess. Elizabeth willingly consented ; she had always retained an affectionate remembrance of her old friend and wished to meet her again ; she liked the idea of extending the ægis of her new dignity over these unfortunate folk, and she believed she had sufficient influence with the Elector of Brandenburg to enable her to protect them efficiently, so she bade them come. That she had to contend with some dissuasions is evident from Anna Schurmann's own narrative. She wrote in her journal :—

Putting aside all interference, and firm in her resolve, the Princess wrote to me direct, informing me that she was well acquainted with my intention of freeing myself from the world in order to devote myself entirely to the practices of the true Christian religion, and to end my days calmly and happily in communion with pious spirits. She was good enough to say she recalled our former friendship, and therefore offered to me and our whole community the free and public exercise of our religion throughout the whole of her little State of Herford. . . . It was evident to us all that this was a special manifestation of Providence in our favour, and we immediately set about profiting by it.

Rumour, however, travelled faster than the refugees, and the burghers of Herford protested energetically against having a colony of socialists, if no worse, settled in their midst, and showed a disposition to make active resistance. Elizabeth had taken the precaution of appealing to the Elector for his sanction and support, and thought she would be able to defy them. She wrote to her cousin :—

Your Highness doubtless knows that the learned Schurmann, with some young girls from Holland and Seeland, has wished to form a community at Amsterdam. But as they had with them two pastors detested by the Dutch people, who have been victims of all sorts of calumny, although they had been enrolled by the Synod of Dordrecht, and had remained faithful to the teachings of the Reformed Church, they wish to place themselves under my authority, to build a house on my domain, and recognise me as Abbess in the same way as the noble foundation upon the mountain (the Stiftberg), and to this end to transport hither all their goods ; a step which is most natural and could surprise no one. They ask nothing in exchange but the assurance of being permitted to have Divine Service celebrated by the said pastors without molestation, and to enjoy such liberty as my other subjects. If your Highness will deign to take them under his protection, I can the better satisfy them and aid them in their pious designs that their worship and other immunities may be guaranteed them ; but I must entreat you to communicate on the subject with no one but M. de Schwerin, failing which secrecy there might be much difficulty made between the two countries, between Holland and Zeeland where they would sell their possessions, and this country where they seek to buy ; the whole affair

might be entrammelled. As I doubt not M. de Schwerin will fully inform you (as I have informed him) of all the arguments in favour of what I request, I will not farther importune your Highness, but merely recommend myself to your favour. So many have experienced the effects of your kindness that they would be unworthy to live did they not testify the most lively gratitude, as is the duty of your very obedient, very humble, and much obliged servant,

ELIZABETH.*

The Elector acceded to her request, but so great were the disturbances in the town that the Abbess threatened a military occupation, and wrote in distress to her cousin for support :—

Your Highness will remember that which I communicated in my former letter of Mademoiselle de Schurmann and other persons who had resolved on separating themselves from the world, and founding a community under my Abbey, and how by the intermediary, M. de Schwerin, and by a letter of September 6, 1670, you declared that you would favour the project and grant my request, so long as the sectaries showed themselves conformable to the worship of the Reformed Church and caused no scandal. On this assurance they have arrived here, but as their enemies had already spread injurious reports against them, many persons, notably the illustrious minister of your Highness and several of the Reformed preachers, have at my request conferred with them at great length, and have been constrained to avow that their belief and their teachings are in conformity with those of the Reformation, that their pastors do not exercise in public any but the Reformed Religion, and have subscribed to the tenets of

* *Briefe der Kinder des Winterkönigs.*

the Synod of Dordrecht, to the Institutions of Calvin, and to the Heidelberg Catechism. Nor could any one affirm with truth that they have occasioned the least scandal in this place : their whole care is to lead a tranquil and retired life in the fear of God, and their conduct has been exemplary, insomuch that all impartial persons who have talked with them, have found them quite other than their enemies had represented them.

My sole intention in the matter is to render to God the honour due to Him, to aid these people in their good and Christian resolutions, and to improve this community, which is somewhat lacking in this respect, by the presence of earnest Christians, by authorising them to build upon our free and princely territories such houses as they may require, persuaded that this country can only gain by their presence, and that the citizens, merchants or work-people will profit in many ways, and can receive no injury thereby.

The Elector, however, having received a protest from the Duchy of Cleves, thought it right to institute an inquiry before endorsing his former permission, sending commissioners, who, however, had orders to proceed with all gentleness and not suffer the Labadists to be injured in person or property. Elizabeth, who as Princess of the Empire believed herself answerable to no one but the Emperor, and had sought aid rather than permission from the Elector, was rather indignant at his espousing the side of the town. She wrote to her cousin :—

I understand your Highness has been told much evil of my Dutchwomen, and indeed much has been written to me from Holland about them ; if I did not see them

every day and have opportunity of judging at every hour of their conduct, I would be the first to send them away. But I beg your Highness not to condemn them without a hearing, and at least to await the arrival of General Ellern. If he cannot show you clearly that not only religion but the country itself has prospered since their arrival, you may refuse them all protection. The magistrates know well that they are not Quakers but true Protestants.

This letter was followed within a day or two by another still more urgent, relating how directly after her letter was despatched the "aged and sick Jungfer Schurmann was attacked in her chamber by insolent people who broke open her window." In consequence of this outrage the Abbess had the colony removed to her own summer residence outside the town. While matters were in an uproar it had been, of course, impossible for them to start building as they had planned, and they were in the meantime lodged in some small houses within the Abbey precincts. Tradition points to a row of timbered cottages of great antiquity, still standing in the street named the Elizabeth Strasse, connecting the "Liberty" with the Radewich. Perhaps the more distant dwelling mentioned by de Swarte may be the summer residence to which they were removed.

The truth about them probably was that they were harmless folk, much like the Doukhobors of Russia of these days, with tenets impracticable in ordinary life ; and that the fanaticism of the Herforders having been aroused, all sorts of wild tales were spread and be-

lieved. The charge of immorality seems to rest on no more solid foundation than does the legend that Anna van Schurmann died from eating spiders ! Elizabeth was far too sensible a woman to have harboured them, or to have suffered herself to be befooled if, with them under her eye, she had seen matter for disapproval.

Though she obtained a modified support from her cousin, her own family decidedly condemned her action. Neither the tolerance of the Elector Palatine nor that of Sophie was of a kind that favoured mystical doctrine nor the abandonment of the world, and they were annoyed with Elizabeth for espousing so unpopular a cause. Liselotte, indeed, with the hasty judgment of youth, declared that her aunt had become childish ; but Elizabeth's correspondence with Robert Barclay at a later day, as well as her business letters to her brother, show her faculties to have been perfectly clear and sound. A curious account was given of a visit paid her by her young nephew Charles, or Karellie, as he was familiarly called to distinguish him from his father, by the tutor, Paul Hackenberg, under whose escort he was travelling and paying visits to various Courts. They arrived at Herford at the same time as the Duchess of Hanover, who had brought the Superintendent of Osnabrück with her—a functionary in the Reformed Church answering in some respects to our Bishop, in point of administration that is, but without apostolical succession—in the hope that he might successfully enter the lists against the peculiar tenets of Labadie. Prince Charles was at this time about twenty, and rather a serious-minded

youth, who would not be so much bored by religious controversy as would most young men of his age. The tutor was clever and witty, and a gossipy historian. In his correspondence is a humorous account of the visit, quoted by Madame Blaze de Bury in her memoir :—

Scarcely were we arrived than the fame and fate of this new apostle excited our curiosity, and drove us to enquire minutely into all his doings, and to find out by what means this relentless contemner of Christian morals and manners contrived to enchain his followers to his will, and in reality to transform them into his tools. At table these and other questions were put by the Princess Sophia, and Labadie's life was pretty freely handled amongst us ; so much so that the Princess Elizabeth stopped our chatter, and declared that we were grievously unjust towards the holiest of men. When we objected that in Orange, Geneva, Middleburg, wherever in short he had been, Labadie had by his strange preachings set the town by the ears and the State in a blaze, the Abbess replied that those were the inventions of wicked men, who by shameless lies tried to destroy the best and most peaceful citizen that ever breathed. When we retorted that he had attempted to sow dissension in our Church and had basely flown from the Church of Holland, she affirmed the statement to be wholly inexact ; that he had never tried to disturb the peace of our Church, nor ever departed from her doctrines ; that he had been calumniated by bad people, and that envy had everywhere pursued him, forcing him to fly with his followers, and seek for some refuge where he could in safety devote himself to the service of the Lord. When she was asked however on what authority and with whose permission this most

ambitious of men had founded a new Church and sect, she boldly answered—she it was who had invited this man, with his heavenly and divine attendants (*himmlischen und göttlichen Schaar*) to come hither from Holland; that she had episcopal rights, and possessed the power of authorising similar associations, and if she chose, dissolving them. In such talk we brought the first evening to a close.

Next morning as soon as we were dressed, we all marched off to Labadie's abode. On the threshold almost we stumbled on Mademoiselle Schurmann, in marvellous strange habiliments. She greeted the intruders with but indifferent courtesy. We were led to her room nevertheless, where many beauties attracted our notice. Paintings done by the erudite virgin herself, which rivalled nature; statues in wood and wax, extraordinary from their expression, and commanding our wondering admiration. Meanwhile there glided slowly into the chamber an old man, with a busy and preoccupied air, not handsome or imposing, but seemingly taken up with I-know-not-what pious speculations; in short, one of those mortals (one saw at a glance) who believes himself raised above the earth and admitted into the intimacy of the Lord. This person welcomed most flatteringly our young prince, making him a speech about his aunt Elizabeth's piety, and the services the Electors Palatine had rendered to religion; therefrom he branched off, and philosophised much upon Divine love, original sin, and human ignorance. Needless to say this man was Labadie: he is already recognised; and I must confess all eyes were fixed upon him, and each one listened as though he were the Delphic Oracle. But all at once our Hanoverian Superintendent took up the question of earthly love,—the greatest and most dangerous tempter of the soul; and hereupon the two went at it, disputing for more than an hour, without,

as I think, going any deeper than mere words. Elizabeth at last got so tired of the noise that she put an end to it, bidding both the wranglers come to breakfast with her.

Here things got worse, and words ran high. Labadie was accused of forbidding women to adorn themselves, and of depriving them by a ridiculous and ill-timed severity of jewels and all other harmless appurtenances of the toilet. He was told that the poor wretched little souls—already disposed to err, and even to fall—were by his doctrine and by the narrow, timid, quaking principles of piety he instilled into them, utterly bewildered and made incapable of discerning right from wrong. In the early Church matters were otherwise ; whereas now, under the most tattered garments, there often beat a heart full of pride and ambition. Besides this he tries to persuade people that there are no indifferent actions, but that everything was crime, sin in the highest degree,—a creed against which common sense revolted ; and what audacity too was that which would condemn to hell fire and eternal punishment whoever did not swell his (Labadie's) train ! As though our Saviour had become so poor already, that His Universal Church was to be found only in a certain little habitation in Herford ! No one either was to approach the Holy Communion Table without the special permission of this Dispensator Coeli ! Whether he now and his followers really believed themselves free from all taint of sin ? Whether it were not the height of impious daring, as well as absurdity, all at once, self-authorised, to set up for regenerate—for a kind of Holy Ghost in person—whilst the inclination of human nature toward sin might at every hour be hiding thoughts the most reprehensible and atrocious, under the most perfect outward marks of piety ! He was told he attributed to himself what were the privileges of Almighty God alone, and

that it was scandalous for weak men to set themselves up as judges, in matters where they were unassisted by aught save their own eyes and reason—both subject to every delusion that should happen to strike them. . . .

To these and like accusations, Labadie and his acolytes, Yvon and Schluter, replied with a tremendous flow of words. The only sense I could divine however was always this :—the world must be left in order to follow the Lord ; believers must take care to avoid all contact with the unbelieving, lest their purity should be sullied ; no Christian was he who had any ambition, or who allowed himself to be troubled about things merely concerning this life ; no proper spiritual love was that which did not keep us always united to the Lord, &c. Schluter added to other arguments that he had passed three years in the Palatinate in order to prosecute his studies and gain wisdom ; but Heaven should annihilate him, quoth he, if he had found there one professor or one pastor who was a pious man !—either, he affirmed, they were slaves of ambition or avarice, or they were given up to drinking, not to mention other sins !

In the midst of our shouts of laughter at this sally, the Prince interrupted us and challenged Labadie to get together his congregation, and give us a regular sermon, for his Electoral Highness was pleased to say, “ He should like to judge of his eloquence in the pulpit.” So forth we repaired to Labadie’s own house, and quickly the congregation assembled—women and young girls, a goodly lot—the prettiest little dolls imaginable ! Then came a collection of tailors, boatmen and furriers, covered with dirt ; for it is to be remarked that amongst this brilliant circle of women not one well-dressed or apparently respectable man was to be seen. After seats had been procured in all haste, a Psalm was sung ; then the 6th verse, 24th chapter of Matthew was read ; and the arch-juggler,

in a long and sickeningly declamatory discourse, propounded that no one was to be called a Christian about whom yet lingered any of the impurities of the world, or who felt any other love than that which the Holy Ghost inspired in regenerate souls. At the close of the speech he addressed himself to the Prince, whose inheritance was the Palatinal Electorate, and whose ancestors had suffered every penalty for the sake of religion—been chased from their country and robbed of their possessions—but in the end restored to all by the hand of the Almighty, in order that they might the better protect the Church against impending danger. Meanwhile he expressed his wish that the present Prince, whose pleasing features announced his exalted origin, should become a true Christian and an ornament of the Church. Whatever might be the earthly fame and glory to which other princes should aspire; whatever prosperity they should dream of as the height of their desires, he hoped and trusted that the Palatinate House would found its claims to renown upon its attachment to religion—upon its simplicity and the purity of its morals; and his firm reliance was that the future representative of the said illustrious race would grow old in the service and contemplation of God, despising the honours that other mortals adored, and partaking in no way of their idle vanities and love of earthly pomp.

Whilst he delivered all this with a loud voice and the affectation of holy inspiration, the most devout attention reigned throughout the assembly; some raised their eyes to Heaven, some smote their breasts and groaned, and some soft-hearted maidens dissolved in tears. As to us, we all came home crammed full of wonderment. During dinner we talked of nothing else but of this absurd and quaking sort of piety to which people are sometimes brought; and our astonishment could scarcely find words when alluding to the number of young women of the best

families, richly dowered, brilliant with beauty and youth, who were insane enough to give up the conduct of their souls to this worst of men and most powerless of priests (only to be laughed at too by him in secret), and who were so riveted to their delusions that neither the prayers of their parents, nor the pleadings of their betrothed, nor the prospect of maternal joys, could tear them away ! Some amongst us said they were assuredly hypochondriacs and unanswerable for whatever they might do ; others opined they should all be sent to the Baths of Schwalbach or Pyrmont, and they would come back cured ! All these remarks and discussions made the Princess Elizabeth highly indignant, and she exclaimed against the wickedness which could induce any one to ascribe to bodily infirmity a greater degree of piety wherewith the Holy Ghost chose to inspire a certain number of individuals purer than the rest ! But to this the Electress Sophia, a lady of extraordinary cleverness, found an answer which turned all bitterness into general mirth, by asserting with mock gravity, that her sister's sole reason for holding to the Labadists was that they were stingy housekeepers and cost little or nothing to keep !

This little jest, launched by Sophie's tact when the discussion was growing acrimonious and she saw that her sister was seriously annoyed, had just enough colour to lend it point, for Elizabeth, though generous, was a careful manager, having learned economy in the school of adversity.

This narrative, inspired by animosity as it is, and very evidently the impression of an irreligious man, goes far to justify Elizabeth in her protection of the refugees. Extravagant as they may have been in

some of their views, and in their arguments trusting rather to eloquence than to logic, they appear harmless enthusiasts, quite sincere in their devotion to their religious ideals, and undeserving of the obloquy that was cast upon them. Elizabeth's indignation at hearing her guests so badgered at her own table was very natural and proper, and was none the less because with her trained logical faculty she must have been well aware how poorly they supported their own cause. Indeed, the arguments on both sides were singularly futile. In throwing at Labadie accusations of inducing women to give up their jewels and finery, his opponents were but ranking him with all great religious reformers—from St. Peter to St. Francis and Savonarola. But to the Protestant mind all asceticism was abhorrent, and that a woman should prefer the religious life to marriage almost a crime. Elizabeth wisely avoided entering personally into the argument, merely throwing the cloak of her authority over those who were at her mercy and enjoying her hospitality. It is hardly fair to find in this scene, as her English biographer professes to do, any evidence of senile weak-mindedness.

Whether the refugees were made aware that they were embarrassing their hostess and embroiling her with her own relations, or whether, as is more probable, they became alarmed at the persistent hostility of the town and mistrusted the ability of Elizabeth and the willingness of the Elector of Brandenburg to protect them, they soon afterwards took their leave and went to Leeuwarden, where two years after their

leader died. Anna van Schurmann did not long survive him; she joined her brother at Franeker, and died in 1676.

Elizabeth had repudiated on their behalf any connection with the Quakers, but not long after she learned how much they had in common in their doctrine of interior illumination, and welcomed the visits of the English Quakers who came to Holland with the idea of uniting with the remnant of the Labadists who continued under the rule of Yvon. Hearing of the generous hospitality the Abbess of Herford had shown to them, William Penn was anxious to make her acquaintance, and despatched Mistress Keith, the stepdaughter of George Fox, with a Dutch Quakeress on a visit to the Abbey. They were very graciously and sympathetically received, and the old Abbess took a great fancy to pretty and sweet-voiced Mistress Keith, but, warned perhaps by the worry she had incurred on behalf of the Labadists, she returned a judiciously vague answer to the letter they brought her from Fox:—

DEAR FRIEND,—I must always love and esteem those sincerely who love Our Saviour Jesus Christ, and to whom, besides the grace to believe, is vouchsafed the grace to serve Him. For this reason your letter and the visit of your friends were both most agreeable to me, and I will try, whilst God affords me light and strength, to follow the advice received from both.

Meanwhile I remain your affectionate friend,

ELIZABETH.*

* *L'Influence de Cartésianisme sur les femmes*, Foucher de Careil.

In attendance on the ladies was an eminent Scotch Quaker, Robert Barclay of Ury, with whom the Abbess formed a warm friendship and for some time kept up a correspondence. In these letters we see Elizabeth, still, as ever, a seeker after Truth, after the solution of the riddle of life, the highest good ; but she seeks it now in the ways of piety rather than of philosophic speculation, and the phraseology might be that of an evangelical disciple of Wesley. Yet still she keeps her old independence of mind, and shows plainly enough how far she was from childishness or from a blind following of those whose convictions she respected. Barclay did not consider her converted, though his first letter expressed a strong hope that she would be, and referred to the religious conversations he had enjoyed with her on his recent visit. He had better hopes of the Countess Horn, a Canoness of the Chapter at Herford and Elizabeth's favourite companion and attendant, to whom he sent a message, begging her to study English, presumably that she might read the works of the Quaker leaders. Elizabeth had been very sympathetic about the troubles of the Quakers in England, several of whom were imprisoned, and had given Barclay an introduction to her brother Rupert, begging his intercession with the King for them. Her answer assures him of Rupert's goodwill :—

I should admire God's providence if my Brother could be the means of releasing your Father and 40 more in Scotland. Having promised to do his best I know he will perform it ; he has ever been true to his word, and you shall find me with the grace of our Lord a true friend.

P.S.—The Countess of Hornes sends you her most hearty commendations. She has not had time to learn English, having employed it in more necessary works since God hath visited this family with many sick of smallpox and contagious fevers, of which she has had a care not considering the infection; amongst the rest there was a servant of hers very desperately sick, of whom she had an especial care, deeming her to be a sister in Christ, who did draw great comfort out of the books you left here.

When next Barclay wrote, Prince Rupert, having been “chained by a sore leg,” had not been able to do as much as he had hoped. In this letter the writer urges upon Elizabeth the practice of quietism, rather reproaching her for being occupied with the duties of her calling, which, as she said, gave her unavoidable distractions. He writes :—

Nothing hinders Grace more than the fertility and activity of the natural spirit in its thoughts and imaginations, which must be chained down. . . . The mind sinking down into a profound silence and stillness, a secret power will be revealed to help the soul to retain itself.

Elizabeth’s answer is very characteristic. To her practical mind this advice seemed as difficult to practise as she had found it of old to abstract herself from her surroundings and give herself to philosophic meditation at the bidding of Descartes :—

The 6th of 9ber. 1676.

MY FRIEND,—In your letter dated the 6th of September you approved the sense I have of my poverty, which con-

tinueth still, but I see no way to grow rich in the present condition; the silent waiting is no more in my power than flying through the air, since my calling gives me some diversions. I scarce have one hour of the day to myself, the night is my best time, in which I endeavour to practise your Lesson, but cannot brag of much progress. The Countess of Hornes doth outgo me far, having stronger ties and more liberty. She hath sent to Benjamin Furley an essay of her translation out of English into Low Dutch; it is a treatise in which I have found great satisfaction. I am sorry that my Brother's affection and the King's order have both proved useless to you for the release of your Ivyfull prisoners. It is a happiness indeed to partake of such bonds and be free of the fetters that tie to the world by Ceremonies and Inventions of many kinds which are not to be withstood by one that hath not more Grace than is felt at present by

Your true friend,

ELIZABETH.

P.S.—Your books are not yet come to my hands, but though I sent (it to) the Elector of Brandenburg and my Brother-in-law I am certain neither of them will vouchsafe to read it, but my Brother the Elector will and perchance my nephew the Duke of Hanover, who is a Papist but curious of outward knowledge.

The name of the Duke of Hanover must be an interpolation by the transcriber; obviously the Duke of York must be meant: titles of relationship were in that day very confusedly used, especially by Germans. The son of Sophie was certainly no Papist, and besides was but a lad of fifteen or so. Barclay was inclined to be severe with the Abbess for caring for worldly

business and studies, which make inward silence more difficult to her :—

Thy friend because of her greater simplicity and less attainment in those things, has a readier access to possess and enjoy the naked truth. . . . Abstract thyself from the multiplicity of thy outward affairs, though thou shouldst leave undone not only all things that are superfluous, but even some things that may appear to thee at present to be needful.

Further, he reproaches her with having the service of God performed by an ordained minister : “ countenancing that which is natural and carnal, and concurring to keep up that which God is pulling down.”

Elizabeth was not one to be led blindfold even by a Descartes, as she had shown in the candid way she used to lay her doubts and difficulties before him. To this letter she sent a very dignified and sensible answer :—

Faith and obedience are two precious gifts. I cannot say that I have them though I long and pray for them, but this I am certain, that any action that comes not from thence would be sinful though it were materially good, therefore I must not do anything upon persuasion of others nor out of my own opinion until I have the light of faith for my conduct, which I suppose you will not require from your true friend,

ELIZABETH.

This letter had its due effect, for Barclay in his lengthy answer allows the force of her plea. He declares he would not “ overdrive her,” but only wrote

from pure love. The winding up of his letter is borrowed from the Epistles of St. Paul :—

Dear love to Anna and to Ernestus. George Keith, my dear brother and fellow companion in bonds, salutes thee and Anna.

In June, Barclay was at liberty, as he writes to Elizabeth from London. Not only Rupert, but also Lord Craven had interested himself on behalf of the Quakers, as well as Elizabeth's physician, Franz Mercur de Helmont, who became a convert and astonished the Prince and the Earl by keeping his hat upon his head when he came before them on behalf of the prisoners. But the release, after all, was obtained by the mediation of the Duke of York, who, Catholic though he was, was in advance of his age on the question of toleration. His cousin was delighted. "I do love the Duke of York for it," she wrote in her letter of felicitation.

In the spring of 1677 Penn himself resolved on paying a visit to Herford, and wrote to the Abbess suggesting that a council might be held—presumably at Herford—with the object of combining the Labadists with the Quakers. Strong as was Elizabeth's respect for William Penn, she was not disposed to put herself under his or anyone's guidance, and wrote guardedly, though warmly, as to his scheme :—

The present will inform you that I have received your two letters, and your good wishes that I may attain those virtues which shall enable me to follow the blessed steps of our Lord and Saviour. What I did for His true dis-

cuples weighs not so much as a glass of water, for alas ! it helped them not. Neither did I hope any good from my letter to the Duchess of L. (Lauderdale) as I remarked at the time to Benjamin Furley ; but as Robert Barclay wished me to write I could not refuse, nor leave undone one single thing he deemed likely to further his freedom, although the doing of it should expose me to the mockeries of the whole world. But this, after all, goes no further than a certain social propriety—the real inward grace is yet wanting in your most affectionate friend,

ELIZABETH.

About the same time she addressed a letter to Benjamin Furley as to the proposed visit, assuring him how gladly she will welcome the Quakers to Herford, but doubting the feasibility of a council, since so many have an aversion to whatever relishes of sect—certainly her brother, the Elector Palatine, had. She sent him some of Barclay's books and he read them, though somewhat inclined to scoff. On the *Apology for the Christian Religion* he remarked that he feared the writer was not quite regenerate, since he boasted of his illegitimate descent from the late King James I. He also laughed a little at the austerities of the Abbess, "which did not prevent the return of her *embon-point*."

An interval occurs in the letters, as Barclay made one of the party of Friends who visited Herford, and next year came a long silence ; but Elizabeth received another letter from him shortly before her death.

The journal * of William Penn describes the visit

* Quoted by Madame Blaze de Bury.

very fully, and gives an interesting picture of the life Elizabeth led. The travellers were received at seven o'clock in the morning by the Abbess and the Canoness with great amiability, and immediately held a lengthy meeting, lasting till eleven, when they were invited to dine, from which they excused themselves. In the afternoon another Quakers' meeting was held. The morning of the next day, Saturday, was always devoted by the Abbess to receiving rents and petitions and generally administering her affairs, so she could not give audience till later in the day. In the afternoon Penn fulfilled a promise he had made of giving a history of his own conversion and of all the persecutions he had endured for the faith. Before he had ended, supper was announced, and they adjourned to another room, where they were joined by a sister of Countess Horn and a French lady—a Catholic. After supper Penn resumed the thread of his discourse, and carried it on till eleven o'clock at night, when they separated. On Sunday a large meeting was held at which not only the household but many persons from the town were present. To quote from the narrative :—

Great as was the emotion of the preachers and of their listeners, also in none was it greater than in the Princess Elizabeth, who was so moved that when after the meeting she went to bid farewell to Penn, she could find no words to convey her feelings. She only said, "Will you not come back to us? I entreat you let your home journey from Germany lead you hitherwards again." Penn replied, "We follow the commands of the Lord, and depend upon Him so entirely that we can promise nothing." Thereupon they took their leave, and departed from Herford.

Penn wrote to the Princess from a village near Worms, informing her that he had failed in seeing her brother, the Elector Palatine, with whom she had been very anxious to bring about a meeting. Her answer enlarges on his spiritual advice, and she goes on :—

I rejoice that your journey has fallen out so happily, and that the bad weather has not stood in your way; and even so much pleasure have I in hearing of your welcome in Cassel, Frankfort, and Gneisheim. Nothing impresses me more than what you say of our dear good old friend Dury, from whom I less expected such sincere goodwill towards you, as in his lately published book, *The True Christian*, he holds quite a different language. I long to hear of your reception at Friedrichsburg, and should this letter reach Cleves soon enough to be given into your hands there, I shall be glad if you contrived to see the two pastors of Mühlheim, who really seek the Lord in all sincerity, albeit they, like the reigning Countess also, are somewhat prejudiced against your doctrines. It would be a great gain for my family if it were possible to draw them out of their error. But the Lord's will be done, in this as in all that concerns your sincere friend in Christ,

ELIZABETH.

The second visit for which Elizabeth had pleaded took place, and on this occasion Penn met Achatius Dhona, the old friend of the Princess and of Descartes, and had many theological discussions with him. When he took leave Elizabeth's last words to him were: "Remember me, though I live so far away from you, and shall never see you more. I thank you for these few happy days, and know and am certain

that, although I am by position exposed to so many temptations, my soul feels a strong desire for what is best." Penn then gave his parting blessing to her and Countess Horn, and approaching the French Catholic lady, begged of her always to remain true to whatever were her conscientious convictions.

A letter which he received from the Abbess very shortly after his return to London shows her absolute sincerity and the impossibility she felt of working herself up into any condition of religious enthusiasm not wholly genuine :—

DEAR FRIEND,—I am deeply touched by the interest you take in my eternal welfare, and I will seriously reflect upon every line of your advice to me, and try as much as in me lies to follow your counsels ; but God's grace must assist me, for, as you rightly say, He will only accept that which He has Himself inspired. . . . Above all I must feel Him sovereign in my heart, and fulfil whatever He commands ; but I am really incapable of teaching others, for I am not myself taught by the Lord. Give my best regards to George Fox, Benjamin Furley, George Keith and my dear Gertrude.

So long as you write no worse a hand than in your last letter, I can read you very well. Think not that I mean to go back from what I said to you the evening before your departure ; I delay merely until I can act in a way to perform my duty to God and man both. I cannot write you more, but recommend myself to your prayers, and remain your sincere friend

ELIZABETH.

P.S.—I forgot to tell you that my sister has written to me that she would have been very happy if you had passed by Osnabrück on your return to Amsterdam. There is also a certain person from Simburg, living not far from

here, to whom I lent a copy of Robert Barclay's *Apology*, who would be very glad of a little conversation with some Friends.

Elizabeth's last letter to him expressed her good wishes for his success on his distant journey. They never met again, but the deep impression her character made upon him is recorded in his notice of her in a book entitled *No Cross : no Crown* :—

The late blessed Princess Elizabeth, the Countess Palatine, as a right claimeth a memorial in this discourse, her virtues giving greater lustre to her name than her quality, which yet was of the greatest in the German Empire. She chose a single life as freest of care, and best suited to the study and meditation she was always inclined to ; and the chiefest diversion she took, next the air, was in some such plain and housewifely entertainment as knitting, &c. She had a small territory, which she governed so well that she showed herself fit for a greater. She would constantly every last day in the week sit in judgment, and hear and determine causes herself ; where her patience, justice, and mercy were admirable ; frequently remitting the forfeitures where the party was poor, or otherwise meritorious. And what was excellent, though unusual, she would temper her discourses with religion, and strangely draw unconcerned parties to submission and agreement ; exercising not so much the rigour of her power, as the power of her persuasion.

After enlarging on her charity to the poor and obscure and her deep humility, he adds two utterances of hers on his last visit to her. After one of his earlier meetings she very gracefully said : “ I have

records in my library that the Gospel was first brought to Germany out of England, and now it is come thence again." And after the last in her own chamber she earnestly said : " It is a hard thing to be faithful to what one knows. Oh, the way is strait ! I am afraid I am not weighty enough in my spirit to walk in it."

CHAPTER XVII

THE ABBESS LAYS DOWN HER STAFF

The brother and sisters draw together—Money difficulties with the Elector Palatine—Elizabeth's letters to him—He and Sophie laugh at her religious views and friends—Negotiations with Charlotte—Scheme for Protestant nunnery at Stift Neuburg—Elizabeth's annual visit postponed—Sophie goes to Paris—Describes Louise and her surroundings—Elizabeth seriously ill—Constant bulletins to Charles Louis—Elizabeth's last letter to her brother—To Louise—Her death—Her will—Her tomb in the Minster—Her character.

OF all the large and merry family party who had studied and played together in their nursery Court at Leyden, had romped and jested, shared good times and bad, only three remained within reach of one another during Elizabeth's closing years—the two eldest and the youngest. Maurice, Philip, Henriette, Edward, all were dead; merry Louise shut away in her convent—merry still—and Rupert had settled in England for good. He did, indeed, propose to pay Elizabeth a visit in her last illness, but he was himself in very bad health and shrank from the journey. They do not seem to have met since he stayed with her in Cassel just before she settled at Herford. The three who were left in Germany drew closer together, and between them old grievances ceased to rankle.

Money was, of course, at the bottom of the misunderstandings, which had been frequent between Elizabeth and Charles ; besides her unpaid claims for dowry on England and on the Empire, she had certain rights in the Palatinate, based on the marriage contract of her parents, which Charles was either unable or unwilling to allow. At Sophie's suggestion it had been proposed that a part should be paid in wine, for which the Neckar valley was famous, since, as they all knew, " Timon " did not part readily with cash ; but when the Palatinate was wasted by the French wars this was not always forthcoming. The Elector had also offered to settle on her the revenues of the Abbey of Lorbach, but as Elizabeth had reason to suspect that it was in ruins and no revenue forthcoming, she declined to accept it in settlement of her claims. His own ill-health, and the ruin the war had brought to all the prosperity he had so laboriously built up for his country, had made him very irritable, and he even accused his sister of favouring his enemies. Elizabeth defends herself with much gentleness :—

If you would please to reflect on what I asked in my last you would see that the general rule of which you speak in the letter you had the kindness to write me does not touch me : since it would be impossible to abandon just pretensions for that which would not profit me or for a cloister the revenue of which I do not know, and since you did not do me the honour to answer my question it might be supposed to be some old ruin worth nothing. So I must wait till God send you better feeling towards me and makes you know the blessing which waits on just and equitable dealing. And I hope my patience will show

how much I value the honour of being on good terms with you. If I had been guided by my legal advisers I should have acted quite differently ; they assured me that my right was so clear that the arguments you alleged were only so many more proofs and might be turned to my advantage. However I am content to show you the right I have to complain sometimes though I have not done it, and take your part on every occasion when you are mentioned. I do it no less with my heart than my mouth, and it is with joy that I see by your last letter that my actions are not altogether indifferent to you, since you reprove me for the reports that have reached you that I sustain the French side with so much animosity to make people think I was pensioned by them. I do not know that I have ever done that for either party ; we pray God for the Emperor, not for the King of France, and that is all an Abbess can do for either side who does not mix herself in public affairs and wishes for nothing but peace. If I had any animosity it would be against those who ruin my country, but since chastisements come from God for our sins it is useless to bite the stone thrown at us unless we had strength to resist, and if I had you would have nothing to allege which should hinder your showing justice and generosity to your very humble, &c.

Elizabeth had her own troubles throughout the war, and many of her letters to her cousin the Elector of Brandenburg and his Minister Schwerin were to protest against the quartering of troops on the " Liberty " which was attached to the Abbey and possessed immunities which were thus violated. This, of course, added to her expenses and difficulties, but she was very reasonable, and wrote later to her brother that she would trouble him as little as possible during the war :—

So long as I have anything to live upon here, but when every one is able to enjoy the fruits of the earth I hope you will remember that I am a daughter of the house, and ought not to be treated like a servant. Thank God I have still enough to live; and as I am not of the humour to complain as the German princesses do, they think me rich and that it is from stinginess that I do not appear so, but I should live more at ease if I could receive something from my country.

Three years later the same accusation of favouring France was brought up again, and Elizabeth declared that the utmost she had ever said was to regret that he should have made such powerful enemies. With the same letter she sent him one of Robert Barclay's books, having some hope of interesting him for the Quakers; she even suggested he might encourage a colony of them to settle in his dominions, knowing his kindness to the Walloon refugees, but to this he did not respond. Neither he nor Sophie had much sympathy with the enthusiasm of Elizabeth's new religious friends, at whose peculiar religious views they laughed, much as they had laughed at the Labadists. Charles had the easy tolerance of a man to whom religion is not a very personal or vital matter; and Sophie, though she remained always attached to the Reformed Faith, leaned somewhat to Freethinking, and found the discourses of the philosopher Leibnitz more to her taste than those of the Hanoverian divines. She used to get out of patience with her sister's mystical speculations, and expressed herself with characteristic freedom in a letter to her brother;—

There are so many things in religion contrary to good sense that it needs much faith to submit. . . . One can only judge by the reason one has received from nature : everybody makes the truth after his own imagination. Here is a " galimatie " of another kind to those you receive from Elizabeth. God knows which is the wisest of us two.

She used sometimes to declare impatiently that the Abbess took her politics from the prophet Daniel. The nearness of Osnabrück to Herford enabled the sisters to meet frequently, and Sophie, having the pen of a ready writer, kept her brother informed of all family news. References to " la Grecque " are scattered freely up and down her letters, sometimes good-natured, sometimes a little sarcastic, as her manner was. Elizabeth's letters to Charles soften more and more as time goes on ; they sympathised with each other's failing health, compared symptoms, and pressed their own nostrums on one another. Both were beginning to suffer from failing eyesight, but Elizabeth found much benefit from spectacles, and wrote to recommend them in a letter which has a characteristic touch of piety :—

It is always much honour and pleasure when you can gratify me with a letter without taxing your eyes ; mine (which have never been very good) are so much better preserved by the use of spectacles that I have found no change in them since I took to using these, except that I have no runnings from them as I used to have in my youth. As to my devotion I only wish it was austere enough to change me altogether and make me a new creature, even if it were at the expence of my embonpoint or even of

my life. I am ashamed the subject should have been mentioned, for not to love the world when it is about to leave us is no more devotion to God than patience is a virtue when it is a necessity.

A taste the brother and sister shared was the love of gardening inherited from their mother. Charles had sent a present of seeds and plants, acknowledged in a friendly little letter :—

As my garden is always in sight, situated quite close to the windows of my rooms, I have often the pleasure of contemplating the agreeable effects of your favour. I flatter myself with the hope that it will increase and flourish with the plants, and I pray the Almighty to make our dear country to prosper once more, and give you the satisfaction of seeing it regain its former prosperity.*

The welfare of the Palatinate was very near Elizabeth's heart, and for its sake she took a step for which she has been much blamed. Louise von Degenfeld being dead, and the marriage of the Electoral Prince remaining childless, Charles Louis conceived the idea of making a fresh attempt to induce his legal consort to consent to a divorce, and thus set him free to contract another marriage in the hope of legitimate issue. Elizabeth had always remained on sisterly terms with his repudiated wife, and to her he turned to get her to undertake the office of mediator. This she consented to do, though her cousin the Elector of Brandenburg, and his sister the Landgravine of Hesse-Cassel, most strongly disapproved. With Hedwig,

* *Briefe der Kinder des Winterkönigs.*

indeed, it came to an open quarrel, which must have given Elizabeth much pain. There was a good deal to be said on both sides. Charlotte had been unjustifiably treated, and at the time Elizabeth had warmly espoused her cause, but the situation since then had greatly changed ; the rival for whose sake she had been ousted was no more ; she neither sought nor would have consented to a reconciliation, nor would her position be in the slightest degree altered, unless it were for the better, by consenting to acknowledge legally what had been a fact for twenty years. Her own son, who had always taken her part against his father, and would never recognise the Raugräfin or her children, now himself asked for her consent, since for dynastic reasons it was of the utmost importance that the Elector should be at liberty to make another alliance, and to the Protestants divorce was an easy matter. The great-grandfather of Charles Louis and Elizabeth, William the Silent, looked up to as a pattern by the Protestants, had divorced his second wife and taken a third and yet a fourth, and no one had thought the worse of him. To Elizabeth the succession of the Catholic cousins of the Neuburg branch would seem a calamity, and since Rupert would neither marry nor return, this must be the inevitable end.

To persuade Rupert to rescind his rash vow and to consent to some scheme of a suitable alliance had been Elizabeth's effort for long, and finding him adamant, she had begged Penn to use his powers of persuasion when he returned to England from his visit to her,

with a touching faith in the efficacy of his influence. The Quaker had, however, no better success than the sister ; Rupert had sworn that never again would he set foot in the Palatinate, and he was " ever a prince religious of his word." So when this hope failed Elizabeth made an attempt, vain as the other, to induce the Electress Charlotte to forego her revenge. It may have been an error of judgment ; it certainly was useless, but, allowing for the point of view, the Abbess was surely not so greatly to blame. Happily she did not live to see the failure of her line and the ruin of her country.

A letter from Sophie in February, 1679, contains the first reference to the Elector Palatine's scheme of forming an order for well-born maidens at the Stift Neuburg, and Elizabeth's experience is invoked. It was not intended that these nuns should be bound by any vow of celibacy, and Sophie prophesies disaster, with comments somewhat coarse. It was, in fact, less a religious order than a *Stift* such as still flourishes in Protestant Germany as a refuge for will-connected spinsters. Elizabeth's answer, unluckily not preserved, appears to have asked whether Stift Neuburg had not been settled on Charlotte, for Sophie, writing to her brother, says :—

I have already told E. that Stift Neuburg is not in Charlotte's settlement, and that the Electoral Prince will confirm it to his sisters (the children of the Raugräfin Louise).

It would be particularly interesting to know what rules Elizabeth drew up or suggested for this lay convent, but unfortunately no letters from her about it are extant, perhaps because she usually paid a visit to Heidelberg in the spring, and could then make her suggestions by word of mouth. The visit, however, was not to take place as early as usual. In March, she writes that the care of her flock and indisposition will hinder her paying her customary visit ; she had been suffering since winter from a cough. She also condoles with the Elector on the bad legs which had kept him a prisoner, and begs him to try a milk diet which Rupert had found very beneficial for the same complaint ; but the Elector did not like milk, and refused.

As the season advanced he again urged her coming, and in May she wrote to her sister that as soon as peace was signed—the French war had been going on all the last year—she will pay her respects—

if (writes Sophie) you will allow her to bring la Frailen de Horn, Mad. Codwitz, and La Gheel, also her steward who acts as secretary, two gentlemen, three footmen, two pages, and five women servants, a coach, a calèche, and a chariot for the luggage, in all twenty-seven horses.

Her brother was rather dismayed at this large order, and answered :—

I don't believe that the Prophetess Deborah when she governed Israel travelled with such a train as she proposes to honour me with. I shall make no objection when Peace is established, which I understand is a condition of her

visit, but I hope it will not take place before the repairs of the rooms at Heidelberg, many beams having been burnt by the negligence of the deceased architect, who let them go under the hearths. These must be replaced with brick.

The visit was, after all, again postponed. Peace was not yet signed, and the next month Elizabeth herself was plundered by the French, some of her dependencies from which she drew her rents being devastated. In August, Sophie writes :—

The poor Abbess of Herford is almost ruined ; she wants me to describe the conduct of Créqui to Liselotte.

But, alas ! Liselotte had little power over the politics of her brother-in-law or the conduct of the French generals ; nothing she could say availed to protect her father's territory from ruin, and she was little likely to be able to do anything for her aunt.

About this time Sophie departed for Paris to pay a visit to this beloved niece who was now Duchess of Orleans, and also to see her sister-in-law Anne, Edward's widow, and her remaining sister, the Abbess of Maubuisson. Of the latter she writes a very interesting account :—

Her happy temper is not in the least changed. I found her very content, for she lives in a very beautiful place ; her garden is very large and most pleasant. . . . I only see the nuns of this convent, who have more virtue than learning, and I find them very happy, as also Madame the Abbess, who observes the Rule with great regularity, and passes for a saint. I could be very happy in such a life if I had not a husband and children. The convent is

large, clean, and commodious, and the gardens of such extent that one is quite tired with walking round them.

This Catholic convent was evidently more to Sophie's taste than her other sister's Protestant Abbey, where the austere Puritan tone jarred with her unaffected liveliness. In her Memoirs, after describing a visit to the French Court, she adds: "The next day I returned to Maubuisson, my never-failing haven of happiness." The two sisters had not met for nearly thirty years—not, in fact, since Sophie left the Hague to go and live with her brother in Heidelberg. She had always been very fond of Louise, and in the description of the three sisters in her Memoir spoke warmly of her charm and bright, happy disposition, as well as of her great artistic talent.

Louise lived to a cheerful and healthful old age, retaining to the last her interest in art. In 1699, at the age of seventy-seven, she was painting a copy of Poussin's "Golden Calf" as a present for her sister Sophie. Her ascetic practices seemed to agree with her; she ate no meat, slept on a bed as hard as a stone, sat on a straw stool, and rose always at midnight to attend chapel. Yet she was never ill nor did she ever lose her high spirits. "She is better-tempered, more lively, sees, hears, walks better than I do," wrote Liselotte when her aunt was eighty. "She is still able to read the smallest print without spectacles, has all her teeth complete, and is full of fun, like my father when he was in a good humour." * She died at eighty-eight.

* *Rupert, Prince Palatine*, Eva Scott.

While Sophie was absent Elizabeth was becoming very seriously ill, and there could be no more talk of her leaving home and travelling to Heidelberg. In September, she wrote to her brother telling him that she had been and still was very suffering, and that her doctors were unable to agree as to the cause. Sophie wrote at the end of the month to Charles Louis expressing great uneasiness, and telling him they feared dropsy. On her return home on 15th October she learned that her sister was much worse, and the doctors had declared her case incurable. She wrote of "the pitiable condition of Elizabeth," adding, "There is nothing sadder to my mind than to linger on as she may for months. I will set off in the morning to visit her." A week later she writes :—

I will relate the visit that I made to Herford. My sister was in bed, all her body, legs, arms, and throat like a skeleton, only her stomach frightfully swollen with dropsy. . . . She spoke of her death with smiles. "I shall not leave much goods nor gear," she said ; "I should wish to be buried without ceremony and without a funeral oration, which is but flattery." She is pleased when those she loves ask news of her.

This account is from Sophie's letters to the Elector Palatine. In her *Memoirs* she writes :—

After both (the writer's husband and brother) were gone, I heard that my sister, the Abbess of Herford, was dangerously ill and urgently desired to see me, so I lost no time in hastening to her. Her joy at my arrival was indescribable : one might have thought an angel had come down from Heaven to cure her. She was surrounded

by people whose gloomy piety had been a weariness and a torture to her. They had deprived her of all amusements, even music, though her mind required to be diverted from the malady—incurable dropsy—which afflicted her. At the commencement of her illness, though in great suffering, she was quite composed, saying that she had to thank God for sixty years of health, that one must die once, and reach death through disease; and with the utmost calmness she had ordered her coffin and made her will. I remarked however that her mental power ebbed with her physical strength, so that at last, when sinking beneath the ravages of disease, her mind began to wander, and she believed herself to be entirely cured, though death was close at hand. I was deeply shocked to witness her piteous state, and to realise that though I looked upon my sister's body, her real self was gone. Heartily as I dislike sad scenes, I could not leave her, for she clung with passionate tenderness to me. Often she expressed grave anxiety for my children's future should their father die before his brothers.

One day, when I least expected any news, La Gheel came in during my toilette to announce the arrival of Major Jordan from Hanover. Not expecting that his mission was important, I did not hurry myself, but when ready, desired him to meet me in my sister's room. Handing me a letter from General Ofener, he informed me that Duke John Frederic had died at Augsburg after two days' illness. The shock was so great that I myself turned as pale as death. Though deeply lamenting so dear a friend, I yet had cause to thank God for delivering my husband and children from their enemies, as I was forced to count all at Zell. My poor sister shared my sentiments on this most unlooked-for event, and saw me with regret depart for Osnabrück after bidding her an eternal farewell.

Charles was deeply concerned to hear of his sister's condition and sent his own physician to attend her. There was a suggestion of attempting an operation, but Elizabeth said she would rather die her own death than be put to death by doctors. He also proposed her trying "the waters," the cure for all ills in the seventeenth century, and told her how much benefit Lady Carlisle had derived from "Tonbrigge." Poor Elizabeth was far enough from being able to take a journey to England, being, indeed, almost ready for the longest and last journey. She wrote gratefully to her brother, evidently suffering, but perfectly resigned. She mentions having tried various remedies, amongst them hellebore and "Prince Rupert's drops." These had been compounded by her own medical attendant Helmont, but they had given her no ease, and Rupert had promised to make up and send her some.

As death drew near sisterly affection blotted out the memory of old differences, and she wrote :—

It is a great consolation to me, my dear brother, that you testify so tender a sympathy for my sufferings, and that you still remember the old friendship between us, the interruption of which caused me so much grief, though I felt it best to complain to God alone, who knew the integrity of my intentions ; He recompensed them also in this world, and caused me to find amongst strangers that which I had never had at home. I have never failed to preserve my affection for our country, and it would have been a great joy to me to have been permitted to return thither and pay you my respects, but it was not God's will.*

* *Briefe der Kinder des Winterkönigs.*

At the end of October she wrote a farewell letter to Louise, of whom no doubt she had been hearing much from Sophie :—

I am still alive, my dear sister, but it is to prepare for death. The doctors do not understand my malady : so I make no more use of their remedies. But they are agreed that it proceeds from lack of natural heat and vital spirit, which all their science is not able to supply ; the minister by whom I am served has told my people that I ought to put my affairs in order, that I may not be taken unawares ; this I have done as regards this world.

And now it remains only that I prepare to resign to God a soul washed in the blood of my Saviour. I know it stained with many sins, and especially with having preferred the creature to the Creator, and having lived for my own glory, which is a kind of idolatry. This is what causes me to suffer pains which I endure almost every day with joy, knowing that it is just that the body should suffer for the sins it has made me commit. This is the cross which I compel myself to take up to follow Him to His glory, renouncing myself to submit wholly to His will. I do not know whether after this I may have strength to write to you or to the Duchess of Hanover, but I will send you news of me by Mademoiselle de Horn. The Prince de Salms has sent a gentleman to enquire for me in my illness. I learned from him that the King of France refuses to render up his Principality, contrary to the articles of peace, unless he will render homage to his Most-Christian Majesty : I beg you to do what you can to find some expedient by which he may remain a Prince of the Empire ; and mention it to the Duchess of Hanover that she may negotiate the affair to the advantage of her nephew.

Adieu, dear sister, I hope that we shall see each other in another world, and that God will prepare us so well in this transitory life, that we may see His Face eternally in the future.

ELIZABETH.

This must have been written during the time that Sophie was absent after receiving the news of her brother-in-law's death. Though in her Memoir she speaks of having taken a last farewell of her sister at that time, letters to Charles show that she was there again in November. She writes :—

Elizabeth fails more and more, and they do not think she will suffer more in dying than she does now. It seems she will go out like a candle. She would like to see me again.

And on the 23rd :—

I have been to see our poor sick sister, whom I found very bad and much changed. She showed me your two letters, but said she could not answer them with her own hand. She is always in pain and her strength lessens. Belmont had given her Prince Rupert's drops, which he had made himself, but P. R. says they are not well made and he will send her some he has prepared himself which she will take to see if they will soothe her pain, for she does not think of cure, and wishes rather to die than to live in such misery. I am glad you did not follow her advice to take milk, for that seems to have brought her to this state. Belmont no longer amuses her : she says he grows childish.

In a later bulletin—

She thinks only death will relieve her sufferings.

Sophie either remained for the winter at Herford or came frequently from Osnabrück. On 21st December she writes that Elizabeth's strength seems failing. She hopes her brother will not be as vexed at her disposal of her property as he was with the will of the late Queen. On 4th January she writes her New Year's greeting from Herford. Her visit, she said, had cheered her sister, who did not speak so much of death as when she was there before. She was, however, greatly changed since the last time, and seemed "like a candle guttering out."

She can hardly speak, but likes to have me near her. She gave me two crystal vases for Etrennes, and a silver box to Madame Harling.

Her mind was perfectly clear, and she had fixed a Chapter Meeting to take place on the 21st in order to appoint the Princess of Anhalt as coadjutrix. It was hardly thought she could live over the meeting, for on the 18th they believed her dying, and such bad news was sent to Heidelberg that Charles countermanded a comedy which was to have been performed, though Sophie, with the odd characteristic levity that went with her real warmth of heart, observed that in her opinion one needed amusement all the more at such a time. At the end of the month there was a decided rally, and it seemed possible she might linger till April or even improve; but it was the last flicker of the dying flame, and on 12th February Sophie announced her death. It had been so painful to see her linger in such suffering that it was a relief when

all was over. There can be little doubt that the illness of which she died was an internal cancer, a malady then but little understood ; the agony of pain she suffered and the increasing dropsy alike point to it. She endured her sufferings with fortitude, and entered into rest at the opening of the sixty-second year of her age.

She made a very just will, leaving the bulk of her property to her much-loved cousin the Elector of Brandenburg, to whom she owed not only faithful and continued kindness and support, but for many years a maintenance. She makes affectionate mention of Rupert :—

To Prince Rupert, who has been always a dear and faithful brother to me, I intended to leave all I have ; but for the above-mentioned reasons I must change my purpose, and trust that he will not take it amiss. I leave to him all my claims in England, and will ever pray for his temporal and eternal welfare.

There were many bequests of jewels, plate, and small sums to relations, and Sophie found there was more to meet these than she had expected. “ By what she leaves,” the sister remarks, “ she was *bonne ménagère*.”

She lies beside her predecessor and cousin, whom she had loved and faithfully served in life, among all the Abbesses of Herford, behind the high altar in the minster. She desired to be buried quietly by night, without ceremony or funeral oration. Her raised tomb bears the following inscription in Latin :—

D. O. M. S.

H. S. E.

Serenissima Princeps, et Antista Herfordiensis

ELIZABETH

Electoribus Palatinis, et Magnæ Britanniae Regibus orta

Regii prorsus animi virgo

Invicta in omni fortuna constantia et gravitate

singulari in rebus gerendis prudentia ac dexteritatæ

Admirabili eruditione atque doctrina

Supra sexus et ævi conditionem celeberrima

Regum studiis, Principum amicitiiis

Doctorum virorum literis et monumentis

Omnium Christianorum gentium linguis et plausibus

Sed maxime propria virtute

Sui nominis immortalitatem adepta

Nata anno 1618 die 26 Decembris

Denata anno 1680 die 8 Februi

Vixit annos 61 menses 1 et dies 16

Rexit annos 18 menses 10 et dies 2.

In 1865, for some reason her tomb was opened; the face was unrecognisable. Her silk robe crumbled to dust at contact with the air.

Elizabeth, who in her modesty would have no funeral oration, would have deprecated the high praise written on her tombstone, yet seldom has a panegyric been better merited or more simply true. Unconquered by misfortune, she showed always a noble constancy and fortitude; capable and prudent in affairs and of an admirable erudition, celebrated beyond the wont of her sex, the friend of learned men and of princes, hardly a phrase is exaggerated. It

was probably the composition of the brother and sister who loved her to the end, and went to the gate of the dark valley with her.

Her character, often misunderstood in her lifetime, has suffered much misrepresentation at the hands of her biographers, and she has been superficially written down "clever but unamiable." Her own letters, some of them only made public in recent years, are her best justification, for in them she is seen always concerning herself for others. Philosopher though she was, she was woman too and a very loving one, having her family's interests always at heart, and doing her very best according to her lights for the welfare of her younger sisters. That her relations with her mother were not always cordial can hardly be counted blame to either; to say nothing of difference of temperament, Elizabeth was separated from her mother before she was a year old, brought up at a distance till she was nine and then in the Leyden establishment, seeing her parents but seldom till she was a woman grown with formed tastes and habits. She was far more the child of her serious Calvinistic grandmother, with whom in early days the gay, pleasure-loving daughter-in-law had found it a little difficult to agree. In truth, Elizabeth the elder remained all her life younger in mind and tastes than her grave daughter.

How faithful in friendship the Princess Palatine could be her letters to Descartes, to her cousins the Elector of Brandenburg and the Abbess Elizabeth Louise, to Barclay, and to Penn abundantly show, as well as her loyal championship of Anna van Schurman.

and her Labadists to her own inconvenience. Yet she was no weak sentimentalist in religious matters, as her sister and niece were at one time inclined to believe ; she ever maintained her own sane judgment, and would give up her soul to no man's guidance. Dignified she could be, haughty even when necessary, as in the strife with the obstreperous burghers who would have driven away her guests. Her conventual life never weakened her home affections ; she clung to her remaining brothers and sisters more fondly as she neared her end.

She would have made a noble Abbess of the old type had her lot been cast in an earlier day, as her capable administration of her Protestant nunnery proved ; yet one cannot but feel that her loyalty to the tenets in which she had been bred, and for which her family had given their all, was a part of her very nature. Her more facile sister, the Abbess of Maubuisson, may have been happier in her choice, but Elizabeth's temper was more tenacious, and she held loyally to the traditions of her house. She stands, a very dignified figure, eminent in learning, in piety, and in the goodness of her heart, a worthy member of a very distinguished family.

FINIS

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